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ESCAPE AND ACQUIESCENCE: THE YOUNG REBEL IN EAST GERMAN FICTION
OF THE SEVENTIES

submitted by Gisela K. Shaw
for the degree of M. Phil.
of the University of Bath
1984

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1 INTRODUCTION

I

Literature owes its existence to a state of tension between ideal and reality, as reflected in the mind of an individual. Ideal and reality mutually affect each other: as the ideal pushes beyond the confines of reality, it shows up the latter's shortcomings and contributes, directly or, more commonly, indirectly, towards its gradual transformation.

Equally, it can be said that literature is about the interrelationship between an individual (or a number of individuals) and society. It is not possible to talk or write about an individual without at the same time talking or writing about society. The individual's ideals, dreams, hopes as well as his²⁸ fears, obsessions and disillusionments arise and take shape through a constant process of interaction, whether explicit or implicit, with the society he lives in.

The time of life when a person is most likely to harbour his most powerful dreams and when he is most likely to find these dreams colliding with reality, is his childhood and youth. It is also the time when he tends to associate reality with a world he is not (yet) a member of, the world shaped and dominated by adults. He may well feel detached from and unaccountable for this world, perceive it as

* In what follows, the principle of equal treatment of the sexes will be sacrificed to stylistic considerations: 'he', 'his' and 'him' will be used throughout to refer to literary figures of either male or female sex, unless the reference is clearly to one sex only.

impinging on and threatening his personal happiness and freedom. The greater the pressure placed by society on its members in order to make them adapt and conform, the more vehement the clash between individual members' ideals and the reality they find themselves in. Young people, by their very social status, are the most obvious target for such pressure; they are therefore also the most obvious potential rebels.

II

'Youth' - a term to be interpreted fairly loosely so as to accommodate all those not (yet) fully integrated into adult society, whether still in their teens or somewhat older in years - is not encountered as a topic in its own right in East German literature of the fifties and sixties. Naturally, we do find young protagonists, especially in works of the early sixties, but (at the risk of oversimplifying a little) their young age is a feature which predestines them not to be at odds with society but to learn to become an integrated part of that society, indeed, to grow and develop with it. Whether we take Recha and her friends in Brigitte Reimann's Ankunft im Alltag¹, Sabine and her lover in Jurič Brežan's Eine Liebesgeschichte², Rita in Christa Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel³ or Robert Iswall and his fellow students at the AEF in Hermann Kant's Die Aula⁴ - none of these young characters would dream of seriously attributing his or her particular problems to adult society; on the contrary, they are keen to solve them by learning to adapt so as to make their own contribution towards the creation of a better, more truly socialist world.

These experiences and attitudes of young protagonists are a reflection of the experiences and attitudes of their respective authors. As Christa Wolf put it:

Sehr früh fühlten wir uns, da wir ihr alles zu verdanken hatten, als ein Teil der neuen Gesellschaft: Jeder Erfolg war und ist unser persönliches Glück, jeder Fehler, jedes Versagen unser persönlicher Schmerz. Jemand - ein Jüngerer - sagte mir: Ihr - ja, ihr seid auch die politische Generation. Mag sein. Für uns war Politik von Anfang an keine Beschäftigung, die man selbst betreiben, aber ebensogut auch anderen überlassen konnte⁵.

The 'political' portrayal of youth in these earlier works, a portrayal which is more often than not embedded in a comprehensive picture of their social, political and economic environment, contrasts sharply with the rather 'a-political', more pronouncedly psychological depiction of young people in East German fiction of the seventies⁶:

Die historische Orientierung der Gesellschaft ist vollzogen, der Prozeß, in dem der einzelne sich begreift, hat einen anderen Charakter bekommen. Die Helden der heutigen Bücher sehen sich einem entwickelten Gesellschaftssystem gegenüber, in dem es gilt, seinen Platz zu bestimmen. ... Der einzelne Fall tritt mehr in den Vordergrund⁷.

These youngsters were born into a well-established social system whose fascist past and early struggles are known to them only from hearsay and fail to inspire them with any sense of guilt or accountability or even moral obligation. Their main concern is with their self-development, their personal satisfaction and freedom of behaviour and action. They object to being pressured into assimilating to a society they perceive as self-satisfied, unconcerned with

individuals' needs, materialistic and utterly boring in its uniformity. Although in most cases, these young protagonists do ultimately integrate to some extent, the narrative focus is on their revolt rather than its final outcome, on their 'otherness' rather than their eventual 'alignment'. Characterization, structure and language in the works concerned are geared to this end, with language (in the form of teenage jargon) being of particular significance.

III

A major prerequisite for these changes to have occurred in the portrayal of youth in East German fiction must be seen in an adjustment of the country's cultural policies in answer to long existing pressures from within as well as from without. The adjustment became possible with the replacement of Walter Ulbricht by Erich Honecker as leader of the SED and the concurrent general process of stabilization and growth of self-confidence at a national and an international level⁸. Erich Honecker's much-quoted undertaking given some months after the VIIIth Party Congress of the SED (1971),

Wenn man von den festen Positionen des Sozialismus ausgeht,
kann es meines Erachtens auf dem Gebiet von Kunst und
Literatur keine Tabus geben⁹,

irrespective of the rigid proviso preceding it, did inspire authors and artists with hopes, some of them justified: a number of taboos were lifted, as they were recognized as equally untenable and counter-productive. Thus it became possible for a book like Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. to be finally accepted for publication

in 1972 although it portrays 'youth' as a self-contained social group with its own particular problems and needs, norms and values, patterns of behaviour and speech. For an orthodox Stalinist and faithful adherent of socialist realism under Ulbricht, 'youth' had been merely a term to describe that section of the population which is still in need and desirous of education and training¹⁰. For him, generation clashes had been unthinkable in a communist society, as he would have postulated that under communism young people naturally come to accept the superior judgment of adults and painlessly integrate into their world, unquestioningly adopt their norms and values. Accordingly, there had, for instance, been no place for sociolinguistics which analyzes the language spoken by various social groups, amongst them the young. Instead, language had been perceived as not only capable of but even requiring central planning and monitoring. Youth jargon, where it existed, had been dismissed as a regrettable by-product of capitalism, just as sociolinguistics was decried as a "bourgeois pseudo-science"¹¹. The familiar attributes of modern youth (from jeans to hair-styles and musical tastes) which had, by the late sixties, become a fact of everyday life in East Germany too, had therefore acquired overtones of political resistance and were interpreted in this way both by those who displayed them and those who were confronted with them.

Honecker's official promise of a lifting of taboos signalled the beginning of a change. Increasingly, literary pieces were not only written but also accepted for publication which centred around the sub-culture of the young, in however (to us) harmless a form. The situation by the end of the decade is summed up by Brigitte Stuhlmacher:

Wie wichtig moderne Musik und die inzwischen schon unvermeidlich gewordenen Jeans für jetziges Selbstverständnis der Jugend auch in den sozialistischen Ländern sind, ist heute schon kein Diskussionspunkt mehr: die Besorgnisse, mit dieser Musik, Rhythmik, Tanz, Kleidung, lässigen Haltung, Sprache und so weiter würden sozialistische Haltungen negiert oder sogar Positionen des Klassenfeindes angenommen, können nur noch historisch begriffen werden¹².

Which does not exclude continuing reluctance in some quarters to apply the concept of "Generationskonflikt" to the socialist scene: illustrated for instance, by Wilhelm Girmus' invective against West German literary critics and their reaction to Plenzdorf's piece:

Dafür haben einige Schlaumeier der westdeutschen Meinungsindustrie gewöhnt, ihre Stunde sei gekommen ... Sie versuchten, sozusagen durchs Schlüsselloch mitzuspielen, und glaubten, sich ihres Auftrags besonders pfiffig zu entledigen, indem sie Edgar zu der tragischen Gestalt unserer Jugend zu stilisieren sich alle denkbare Mühe gaben: Da habt ihr's drüben mit eurem Sozialismus! Ihr habt auch euer Jugendproblem. Bitte! Das gleiche wie wir, ein Generationsproblem. Bitte! Konvergenz im Bösen! Und ihr machtet bislang so, als gäbe es im Sozialismus mit der Jugend und für sie keine Probleme, weil es keine geben könne¹³.

Girmus takes great pains to draw a line between "growing up into socialism": "eine Forderung des Tages, die sich jedem von uns ständig aufs neue stellt", and a "generation problem": "Das ist keine 'Generations'-Frage (Was ist überhaupt eine Generation? ...)"

IV

Developments in East Germany did not happen in isolation, but in response to and interaction with developments in Eastern Europe as a whole. When Honecker took steps towards introducing a more liberal

cultural policy in the GDR, this was not a daring and pioneering deed but a long overdue one, a drawing even with most other countries in the Communist Bloc¹⁴, where the domination of the dogma of socialist realism and all that it entailed had represented no more than an intermittent phase within a long literary tradition. East Germany was the last country to introduce this dogma and it was the last to allow its gentle recession into the background of literary awareness and censorship.

An apt illustration of this is the change in official attitudes towards all forms of slang in general and young people's slang in particular¹⁵.

In pre-Stalinist times,

Cant, slang, dialecticisms and professionalisms were considered part of the language of the revolution, part of the opposition against the literary language, too strongly associated - according to many poets and writers - with the old Russia, its institutions, its antiquated way of life. The literature of this period made extensive use of this new vocabulary, widespread among the young people of the cities¹⁶.

From 1932, socialist realism became the aesthetic dogma not only in the Soviet Union but also, at one stage or another, in all other Communist Bloc countries¹⁷.

By the late fifties and early sixties, the thaw following Stalin's death in March 1953 and the XXth Party Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956 had led to the emergence of a new type of fiction in most Eastern Bloc countries. Critics variously termed it

"young prose"¹⁸, "Jeans Prosa"¹⁹ or just "emancipatory realism" as opposed to "socialist realism"²⁰. One of its main characteristics was precisely its pre-occupation with rebellious youngsters whose communication amongst themselves takes place almost exclusively in their group slang. Nowhere did this new prose go unopposed by conservative literary critics and party functionaries, but a lot of it did eventually *appear in print*.

In Czechoslovakia, as early as 1948 Josef Škvorecký had written his novel Zbabelci²¹ about a group of young people in a provincial Czech town at the end of the Second World War who communicate throughout in a jargon of their own. Publication took till 1958, and Škvorecký's language became the target of fierce attacks. But he continued writing in the same vein and other works by him were published in his own country.

In Soviet Russia, the most notorious test case was Vasilij Aksěnov's Zvězdnýj bilet²² about the escapades of seventeen-year-old Dimitri Denisov and his friends, large parts of which are written in Dimitri's youth jargon of an "extraordinary, almost unprecedentedly intense expressiveness"²³. Aksěnov's novel too met with strong disapproval from traditionalist quarters²⁴, but nevertheless was published in the Soviet Union slightly over a decade before Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. was found acceptable by East German censors.

The emergence of "Jeans Prosa" in the Communist Bloc had coincided with and been re-inforced by the powerful impact of J. D. Salinger's novel The Catcher in the Rye²⁵ on Eastern European writers and readers. Whether and in how far there was a direct 'influence' of the American

book on Eastern European works is perhaps of minor significance in this context; what seems noteworthy is the fact that this literary trend of the fifties and sixties spanning both ideological camps and reflecting the existence of an international and inter-ideological community of the young could have been stalled for so long before gaining entrance to the GDR.

The most widely acclaimed East German contribution to "Jeans Prosa" was, of course, Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. We know from a remark made by the author himself during the public debate following the first appearance of his book that the text, originally a film script, was conceived and written in the late sixties²⁶. It is a sad reflection on the degree of censorship involved in the rejection of the script by DEFA (who had initially asked Plenzdorf to write it) that the "Urfassung", recently published by Peter J Bremner²⁷, not only avoids almost any trace of slang but can also boast of a happy ending which puts it perfectly in keeping with the requirements of socialist realism: Edgar Wibeau merely suffers head injuries from an attempt to hang himself and, on recovery, returns to Mittenberg where he is given a hero's welcome and leaves no doubt as to his intention to complete his period as an apprentice.

When, by 1972, a later version of his text was finally published in Sinn und Form, the tide had turned: although its appearance was followed by intense discussions at all levels regarding its merits or otherwise²⁸, any really detrimental criticism was largely drowned in a wave of qualified or even enthusiastic applause, not only from the young but also from representatives of that very society Edgar Wibeau is so critical of. Thus Professor Dr F K Kaul's by now notorious letter

to the editor of Sinn und Form in which he expresses his unmitigated disgust at the

Fäkalien-Vokabular, in dem des langen und breiten über die innige Funktionsverbindung von Niere und Darm der Plenzdorfschen Figur abgehandelt wird²⁹

remained an isolated instance, a last flicker of a fire long doomed to die. The very fact that this letter appeared in the same periodical which had first printed Plenzdorf's controversial text, and in the very number which contained a German translation of a short story by the Soviet pioneer of 'young prose', Aksënov, can be seen as an indication that the editor, Wilhelm Girmus, regarded Kaul's outburst as a welcome stimulus liable to evoke a lively, but essentially harmless public debate. This purpose Kaul's letter served to perfection.

In comparison to the public outcry that had followed the appearance of earlier works of "Jeans Prosa", such as those by Josef Škvorecký and Vasilij Aksënov, Plenzdorf's book, once it was published, had a reception which can be described as, on the whole, favourable.

Amongst his author colleagues, it aroused a sense of relief, as can be gauged from the carefully worded remark made by Karl-Heinz Jakobs in his laudatory speech at the Academy of Arts (on the occasion of the awarding of the Heinrich-Mann Prize to Ulrich Plenzdorf):

In aller Gelassenheit und ohne polemische oder enthusiastische Zuspitzung nach irgendeiner Seite können wir sagen: Plenzdorf hat mit seinem lobenswerten Text einen deutlich sichtbaren Hinweis gegeben, dem wir Glauben schenken und der unsere Aufmerksamkeit in Anspruch nimmt, so wie es uns an Landstraßen gelegentlich passiert, wenn wir, beispielsweise gesagt, das Verkehrszeichen sehen: Ende des Überholverbots für mehrspurige Kraftfahrzeuge³⁰.

Not surprisingly, Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. set a trend: it became the first of a whole series of books about 'young rebels' against adult society, young people undergoing a development of a similar pattern and displaying similar forms of attitude, behaviour and speech. However, there is a remarkable difference between Plenzdorf's story and those of his followers: While Edgar Wibeau avoids ultimate alignment and compromise, none of his fellow rebels created by authors other than Plenzdorf does. In other words, the structure of the "sozialistische Bildungsroman" is once again re-instated intact³¹.

Interestingly, Karl-Heinz Jakobs is the only other author discussed here to have described - albeit in a somewhat half-hearted manner - a young person's rebellion without its either ending in social integration or meeting with unambiguous condemnation by the narrator.

V

In this thesis I propose to analyze on the basis of a dozen works of fiction published in the GDR between 1970 and 1979, the portrayal of young people, or more precisely the portrayal of their experience of the clash between their ideals and the reality of adult society³². The texts were chosen not primarily for their inherent literary merit but rather more for their being indicators of the process of change (and its implications) brought about by the arrival of the Honecker regime. While my original plan had been to include all main works of fiction of the seventies in which a young protagonist in some way

collides with established society, it became necessary to restrict the material base to works classifiable as 'young prose' in order to allow for a detailed analysis. The criteria applied are certain major common features relating to volume, characterization, narrative perspective, structure and language. This, unfortunately, excludes:

- (a) all short texts (such as short stories as well as e.g. Maxi Wander's interview scripts³³)
- (b) texts about outright political opposition by the young - most of them coming under (a) as well - which therefore were never accepted for publication in the GDR³⁴
- (c) teacher-pupil novels³⁵
- (d) and - most regrettably - Volker Braun's Unvollendete Geschichte³⁶ and Das ungezwungne Leben Kasts³⁷.

For the reasons outlined above, Plenzdorf's texts will be discussed separately with regard to protagonists' characterization and narrative structure. But there will be a joint analysis of all texts as concerns certain recurring motifs and linguistic features. Seen in relation to Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., the texts under discussion fall into two groups. On the one hand there are those which appeared between 1970 and 1973³⁸. Here the portrayal of rebellious youths tends to be rather more tentative in a variety of ways, more deeply indebted to East German literature of the sixties, but also more imaginative and varied in terms of characterization, language and structure. These works are also significant as evidence that

Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. represented not so much a completely new venture as the climax of an existing trend, which had so far not been allowed to come out into the open.

On the other hand, there are the works published after 1974³⁹ which reflect more or less clearly the impact of Plenzdorf's success on his fellow writers. It cannot come as a surprise that, once the figure of the young rebel was moulded *after* the Plenzdorf model, novelty and vigour gave way to routine and imitation and the incentive for writers to add to this body of books soon waned. By the late seventies, the young rebel had ceased to represent a challenge to writers and readers alike and had instead become an accepted and stock figure, of interest largely to literary critics.

2 ESCAPING TO UTOPIA: THE CHARACTERIZATION OF THE YOUNG REBEL

The young literary figure under scrutiny here is the individual who is primarily concerned with himself, his own self-development in an adverse environment. However, he is not the person who, on discovering the clash between the real and the ideal, is prepared to fight for an improvement of the former. Indeed, there is no indication in these works that the social environment is capable of changing. Whatever changes occur must occur within the individual. And as the society in question is not perceived as allowing for outsiderdom, opting out or doing one's own thing, the individual who insists on his own rights and freedoms heads for physical defeat.

This physical defeat can, in narrative terms, be presented in two ways. It can be interpreted as a moral victory - Utopia as the refuge for the strong. This alternative is pursued by Plenzdorf's protagonists. Or it can be shown to be a moral as well as a physical defeat - the fate suffered by those young rebels portrayed as 'weak'.

There is a third way for the narrator of handling the situation: escape from reality can be described as no more than a temporary vacation from it, a first step towards its acceptance based on the acquisition of better judgment. This third possibility will be seen to be the most frequently applied one, as it implies the young rebel's ultimate integration and thus satisfies the requirements of the "sozialistischer Bildungsroman".

In what follows all three routes will be traced in East German works of the seventies. Their discussion will be based on an analysis of characterization and narrative perspective.

2.1 Utopia: a refuge for the strong

I

In this first section I propose to deal with Plenzdorf's three book publications as a body rather than with each work individually. By looking at all three together, that is Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.¹, Legende vom Glück ohne Ende and the earlier film version of the latter, Legende von Paul und Paula I hope to throw new light on the first. Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., by now the subject of much scrupulous investigation², is generally interpreted as a refreshing piece of realism compared with which the two later texts, and especially the novel Legende vom Glück ohne Ende, display disappointingly strong features of idealization and stylization³. I would like to suggest that Plenzdorf, rather than having suddenly and unexpectedly shifted from being a brilliant realist⁴ to being a predominantly Utopian writer, underwent no more than a gradual development, the roots of which can be clearly traced in the early work. That is, rather than seeing Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. as another manifestation of the tradition of the "sozialistischer Bildungsroman", I would like to regard it as a manifestation of Utopian writing, reflecting the author's belief that, under the circumstances, the young rebels' refusal to be "aligned" must be equated with a victory of the ideal over the real.

II

The crucial question to be asked in this context is: Do Plenzdorf's protagonists undergo a development which brings them closer to a position of acceptance of social reality, or do they resist such a development?

In the case of Edgar Wibeau, the answer hinges on the interpretation we choose to put on his death. J.H.Reid, in his Introduction to the English edition of Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.⁵ suggests two possible lines of interpretation: on the one hand, Edgar as the tragic victim of a society which has no place for the gifted individual; on the other hand, Edgar, the repentant individualist whose return to the fold of the collective is sadly thwarted by a fatal accident. Adherents of the former view (favoured, incidentally, by Reid himself) regard Edgar as a modern Werther, the young idealist driven to suicide by society, among them the Marxist (now West German) critic F.J.Raddatz who speaks of the book as "die Geschichte ... von einem gesellschaftlichen Mord"⁶. Similarly, Andrew Hollis⁷ describes Edgar's end as "a sort of existential suicide" stemming from the experience of defeat, i.e. rejection by Charlie⁸.

Those subscribing to the latter line of interpretation, a line naturally favoured by East German critics, i.e. that Edgar's return to the collective is thwarted merely by an unfortunate accident, see the work as fitting into the tradition of the "Bildungsroman". This makes Edgar the young person who learns to adapt his absolute standards to the facts of social life, who 'grows up' to become a member of the society which he began by despising. Robert Weimann⁹ advocates this view:

Während dort (in Goethe's Werther) der Weg von Homer zu Ossian und "vom Reden zum Nicht-sprechen-können, vom Gespräch ... zum Monolog und schließlich zum Schweigen" führt, ist für Wibeau, der nicht die Individualitätsproblematik des bürgerlichen Helden teilt, eher das Gegenteil kennzeichnend: eine Steigerung des geistigen und praktischen Ausdrucks seiner selbst. Sein Tod kennzeichnet nicht den erfüllten Endpunkt eines Schweigens, sondern erfolgt (durch Unfall) auf dem Höhepunkt einer praktischen Tätigkeit, deren abgeschlossenes Resultat (die Erfindung) zugleich beides: das Auffinden seiner Fähigkeiten und das Zurückfinden in die Gesellschaft, bedeutet hätte¹⁰.

Although Weimann stresses the ambiguity of Edgar's words regarding his intended return to society or otherwise¹¹, an ambiguity which he attributes to Plenzdorf's self-imposed restriction on his narrative perspective, he leaves no doubt that to him Edgar Wibeau, if anything, has greater affinities with Holden Caulfield in Salinger's Catcher in the Rye than with Werther: "Edgar Wibeau ist vielleicht zu Zeiten ein proletarischer Holden Caulfield, aber er ist kein Werther in Jeans"¹².

M. Reich-Ranicki voices a similar conviction (however different the tone) in his review of Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.¹³: after brushing away the suggestion (implicit in Plenzdorf's very choice of title) that Edgar Wibeau should be seen within the tradition of Goethe's Werther, "Welch Einfall, aber ach, ein Einfall nur!"¹⁴, Reich-Ranicki continues to show that a more appropriate title would in fact have been "Der Fänger im DDR-Roggen"¹⁵. He appears to see little difference between Holden Caulfield's actual return to society and Edgar's occasional posthumous hints that perhaps his rebellion was not entirely appropriate a reaction to the problems besetting him:

Doch tötet den Jungen mitnichten jener Zufall, den man gern als blind bezeichnet. Edgar wird vielmehr zum Opfer seiner Querköpfigkeit und Einzelgängerei, seiner Unfähigkeit sich einzureihen und unterzuordnen. Der tote Edgar weiß auch genau, was sein größter Fehler war: "Ich war zeitlebens schlecht im Nehmen. Ich Idiot wollte immer der Sieger sein"¹⁶.

His summing-up is therefore: "Unser kleiner Ausreißer ist, wie man sieht, doch ein rechter DDR-Musterknabe"¹⁷.

Reich-Ranicki's view finds support amongst Anglo-Saxon critics.

Martin Kane¹⁸ writes:

Edgar affirms his commitment to the East German social system in direct statements such as "Kein einigermaßen intelligenter Mensch kann heute was gegen den Kommunismus haben" (283) but, more crucially, in his decision to abandon the anachronistic idyll of his hut, turn back on the flight into subjective isolation, and throw in his lot with the collective effort¹⁹.

And, less ambiguously still, for Noel L. Thomas²⁰ "the most fundamental element of dissimilarity" between Werther and Edgar is the latter's rebellion against his mother, which Thomas perceives as "part of the process of maturing which allows him ultimately to view his life in terms of social usefulness"²¹.

This allows Thomas to conclude:

Werther loses his struggle against romanticism, whereas Wibeau wins through a heightened awareness of his rôle in society. Both novels contain an implicit warning: Goethe's Werther points to the dangerously seductive appeal of imagination and emotion, whilst Plenzdorf's novel reminds the reader of the risks inherent in individualism and the possible isolation from the community.

Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. belongs to the typically German tradition of the 'Bildungsroman' and as such it has its roots in a German literary development which Goethe initiated with his Wilhelm Meister. In this way it may be regarded as a fruitful continuation of a German literary legacy²².

Andrew Hollis²³ offers an intriguing new variant of the view that Edgar does in fact change his mind and intends to return to Mittenberg: While arguing that this is Edgar's attitude just preceding the accident and thereby guardedly agreeing with those who would regard the book as a specimen of the "Bildungsroman" genre, Hollis also wishes to interpret the story as one of defeat. For him Edgar flees from his mother, fails to find his father, takes temporary refuge with Charlie and is ultimately driven back to Mittenberg, "a kind of suicide does take place"²⁴, but it is a suicide which, looked at from a different (i.e. a socialist) perspective, would be judged as a laudable and welcome return to the collective, evidence of newly acquired social and moral maturity.

For Peter Liddell²⁵ Edgar Wibeau shows a clear enough determination to make a contribution to society. His death is "not crucial", but merely

a literary device, allowing Plenzdorf to undertake a light-hearted retrospective consideration of an otherwise not very exceptional and very brief life²⁶.

III

Thus it seems that, on the whole, critics have inclined towards the view that, whatever the minor subtleties and differences, Plenzdorf's Edgar is to be seen as another Holden Caulfield, albeit with a problem of greater magnitude on his hands, for he is a member of a socialist society, where, as Reich-Ranicki puts it: " ... jede Kritik an der Welt der Erwachsenen automatisch einen eminent politischen Charakter hat"²⁷. This view naturally draws considerable support from the fact that Edgar is portrayed as a fervent admirer of the young American rebel and that Plenzdorf learnt a great deal from Salinger's book²⁸.

And Salinger's book, without any doubt, does fit neatly into the wider context of the "Bildungsroman": Holden Caulfield's experience of the clash between his ideals and the reality of society ends with his opting in favour of the latter. The reader is made aware of this at the very opening of the book when Holden informs him:

I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around Christmas before I got pretty run-down and had to come here [the sanatorium] and take it easy²⁹.

We witness his progressing recovery from what, with hindsight, he has come to regard as an illness, and the book closes with Holden's assurance that he is looking forward to seeing his old school again as well as the people he used to dislike so heartily³⁰. In other words, his re-integration into society is well under way; from the very beginning we are aware that tragedy has been averted, youthful

rebelliousness channelled into ultimate acceptance of reality.

"Bildung", "Entwicklung" have taken their course.

There is another work which must have been known to Ulrich Plenzdorf when he was working on Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. and which critics have occasionally drawn on for comparison³¹. It is Vasilij Aksënov's The Starry Ticket³².

Aksënov's book is about seventeen-year-old Dimitri who runs away from his Moscow home in order to avoid having to enter university and settling down to a respectable and responsible career. His elder brother, a brilliant scientist, whom he lets into his secret and who tries to dissuade him from carrying out his plan, finds himself confronted with profound contempt and a passionate assertion from the rebellious teenager that he wishes to live his life his own way, shun the need for decisions and concentrate on developing his individuality:

"You surely don't think I've got the least notion of following in your footsteps, do you? You don't think your life is my ideal, do you? Besides, your life, Vik, was the old folks' invention ... But, I tell you, you've never once in your life decided anything for yourself, never once risked anything! To hell with it all, we're scarcely born before our life's course is being mapped out for us and our future decided. So they think! Let me tell you, I'd rather be a hobo and a failure than a good little boy all my life, carrying out other people's decisions!" (31-2)

With a gang of friends Dimitri goes off to distant Estonia, loafing, loving, having fun and making just enough money to keep afloat.

But then comes the change of heart, first signalled by an unexpected delight in hard work: Working on a building site he volunteers for the job of "taking down an old wall, clearing the ground" (167). And while doing so with a frenzy and fury that he himself at first finds hard to explain, a thought occurs to him:

Perhaps, I thought, this is the real thing at last, I mean, smashing up an old wall. Walls are not wanted. You hammer away and then stand back while the dust settles. Then shoulder your iron and go about the world looking for old walls, old walls both sound and unsound, only provided they are old walls nobody wants. Is that it? And batter away at them with all your force? ...

There was a bit of pleasure, standing in the dust you made, then shouldering your iron and walking to another position. I rather liked the idea of a career, clearing up all the places on this globe where there are old walls nobody wants (167).

It is only a matter of time before he gets back to Moscow, to what he used to describe as "the putrid softie urban life"(58). He has changed most of his earlier immature views, but retained his energies, optimism, clear mind, all of which he will now put to use within the society he had fled: " ... it is high time I thought about myself and my life" (201).

IV

There is thus in Aksënov's as in Salinger's novel a clear moral development of the protagonist, a change in their fundamental attitudes towards themselves and the society they live in. How, then, does this compare with Plenzdorf's Edgar Wibeau? Does he too undergo a development of this kind?

Interestingly enough, in the first, now published version of the text³³ he does: Edgar, from disappointment at his slighted love and failure to carry his invention through successfully, attempts to hang and shoot himself simultaneously; both fail and he merely hurts the back of his head in falling. On waking up in hospital, he finds his mother, Charlie and his brigade including Addie around his bed; and on hearing from Addie that he has indeed made an important invention, he allows life to return into him³⁴, which also means that Charlie has become redundant: "Charlotte steht noch ein bißchen rum, dann geht sie, wie man so geht, wenn man nicht mehr gefragt ist"(136).

There follows Edgar's return to Mittenberg, to an enthusiastic welcome by everyone. The last scene shows him and Willi ambling through the city centre - once again fully accepted members of the collective:

Edgar fühlt sich wohl hier, besonders, wenn sich jemand nach ihm umsieht, obwohl ansonsten alles ein bißchen lüftt ist. Und Willi fühlt sich wohl in Gesellschaft von Edgar (138).

Here we have a classical instance of the young rebel learning his lesson and accepting his place in society, duly assisted in the process

by a loving and understanding collective. That nevertheless the text was unacceptable to DEFA must be explained by the fact that he attempts to commit suicide, however casually, even humorously described³⁵, the absence of recognizably negative features in Edgar's (the rebel's) character set-up, and, more serious still, the absence of a clearly identifiable 'positive' figure.

Compared to his earlier self the Edgar of 1972 gives the impression of being a stronger, more forceful and articulate personality, partly for the reason that now he tells his own story (the 1968 version was a third-person narration), talking about himself and his problems in a lively, spontaneous, witty, and above all, perfectly frank manner. He makes no bones about his reasons for leaving home and taking refuge in the garden-shed on the outskirts of Berlin (15-16): He was tired of the pressure put upon him to conform to the adult image of a well-brought up, well-behaved, academically outstanding young member of a socialist society, to mould himself on prescribed models, to relinquish all personal pride as well as any desire to preserve his own distinctive tastes and features. He simply refused to satisfy his mother's ambition to demonstrate: "daß man einen Jungen auch sehr gut ohne Vater erziehen kann"(23).

He hated being treated like a child by his trainer at work (13), being deprived of the chance to experience the wider world outside Mittenberg (41), having his development and experience rigorously trimmed to adult views of what was good for him. His plan to escape had been of long standing and the incident at work (dropping a heavy plate on the master craftman's foot) was merely the last straw as well as a welcome excuse to opt out and embark on the adventure of living life his own way.

He finds the isolation of the garden-shed and the surrounding allotments a perfect setting for self-exploration, for creating that inner and outer scope for freedom needed for his adventure. His experience there, largely emotion-based, ranges from sheer boyish delight at not being told to wash his hands before meals and tidy up his room before going to bed, to ecstatic joy expressed through singing and dancing, avid reading of books which allow for extensive identification with the protagonist, erotic encounters, confrontation with working life, and finally the agony of unrequited love and (unsuccessfully) trying to win against time in the effort to leave his mark in the world.

Edgar holds and voices very distinctive views on a number of matters of significance to his personal and social life. They all display the mark of a youthful, idealistic, spontaneous, frank, critical, independent, sociable and articulate individual, whether they concern jeans, hair-style, books, films, art, music, people or, indeed, issues of more general concern such as the obligation to work, the need to be alone, or the pros and cons of communism.

None of these views appear to change in the course of the book. Nowhere is there an indication that Edgar is forced, by experience he undergoes, to revise and adapt any belief he sustained earlier on. In contrast to sixteen-year-old American Holden, seventeen-year-old Soviet Dimitri and his own earlier 1968-self, seventeen-year-old East German Edgar's basic convictions remain untouched. Following his incognito visit to his father and his decision to invent, all on his own, the non-misting sprayer, he begins to simulate a change of mind in order to quash any suspicion regarding his activities and avoid another brigade visit in his shed:

Ich versagte mir fast alles. Ich zückte zum Beispiel kein einziges Mal meine Werther-Pistole. Ich malte brav meine Fußböden mit der Rolle, und sonnabends ging ich sogar manchmal mit kegeln. Ich saß da wie auf Kohlen oder was, während sie kegelten und dachten: Den Wibeau, den haben wir großartig eingereicht. Ich kam mir fast vor wie in Mittenberg (114).

Edgar is determined not to be "aligned". He certainly does not fundamentally change his views or regret his previous behaviour. Only once, when morally at his very lowest, does he briefly toy with the idea of accepting a compromise and the humiliation of public self-criticism on re-entering the world he had fled:

Ich wollte die Spritze fertigmachen, sie Addi auf den Tisch knallen und dann abdampfen nach Mittenberg und von mir aus die Lehre zu Ende machen. So weit war ich. Ich weiß nicht, ob mich einer versteht, Leute. Wahrscheinlich war mir einfach bloß mulmig wegen Weihnachtsen (139).

But it certainly does not take him long to reject this alternative: Returning to Mittenberg would have been tantamount to a loss of face ("irgendwie entwürdigend", 15), a betrayal of his principle never to concede defeat ("Ich ... wollte immer der Sieger sein", 147), an option for a life as drearily boring as the film he saw at school ("ein Film, in dem die Leute in einer Tour lernen und gebessert werden", 142)³⁵.

Significantly, Edgar, unlike Holden and Dimitri, has no elder brother who might have served as a mediator between him and the world he rejects, as a living example to demonstrate to him that free self-realization and a brilliant career in society are not mutually

exclusive. Edgar is entirely thrown back on himself: Willi leaves him early on (at which Edgar is secretly pleased (28)); and his father not only remains inaccessible but, after all, is also in the same boat of outsiderdom as his son. In short, Edgar Wibeau's "größtes Vorbild ist Edgar Wibeau" (15), and a change of attitudes is not envisaged.

Yet, Edgar is determined not to accept defeat either. Unlike Goethe's Werther, he becomes a fighter, attacking in order not to be attacked. There is something faintly reminiscent of the Hemingway hero about the way he meets any potential enemy of male sex in the pose of the boxer in the ring, whether metaphorically or literally so: Dieter (74-6), Addi (101), and the driver of the bulldozer (137-8) are thus attacked and knocked out. When faced with more than one potential adversary, Edgar adopts a clownish stance; this conveniently disqualifies him as a target for attack and allows him, the self-declared outsider, to preserve his identity and independence at no serious cost³⁶.

Edgar's defence mechanism not only functions in the presence of males; with women his fear of being "aligned" (41, 114) is perhaps greater still. Flight appears as the only means of self-preservation in his relationship with his mother, since open opposition is not a genuine alternative (22). As for Charlie, Edgar's relationship with her is naturally much more complex. She too treats him like a child in need of mothering, but he is also her (potential and, eventually, actual) lover. Certainly, neither of them ever ceases to be aware of the tension between them, the other's efforts to gain the upper hand:

Ich glaube, in dem Moment when they first met hat das Ganze angefangen, dieses Tauziehen oder was es war. Jeder wollte den anderen über den Strich ziehen (48).

Edgar's final victory as a lover does not afford him much joy.

Charlie promptly leaves him, arousing in him thoughts of death (135-6)³⁷. However, when events come to a head, Edgar does not follow Werther's example, does not commit suicide in the accepted sense; although he does admit to feeling a certain sympathy with him:

Ich war jedenfalls so weit, daß ich Old Werther verstand, wenn er nicht mehr weiterkonnte. Ich meine, ich hätte nie im Leben freiwillig den Löffel abgegeben. Mich an den nächsten Haken gehängt oder so. Das nie. Aber ich wär doch nie wirklich nach Mittenberg zurückgegangen (147).

Edgar neither returns to Mittenberg nor voluntarily kicks the bucket. Instead, he escapes once again, this time in grand style, in a whirl of flames, feeling neither self-pity nor remorse (16, 216). The reader's pity, if any, goes to those who, having been left behind with no inside knowledge of events, now face the agony of trying to come to terms with their own sense of guilt. Edgar himself has, indeed, remained "der Sieger". The tragic element, which might so easily have crept in, is by-passed because Edgar does not 'really' die; his death has none of its usual finality; he is granted the chance to escape into an in-between realm and enjoy his escape as a triumph over reality and all those working in its service.

V

Turning from Edgar in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. to Paula in the "Filmerzählung" Die Legende von Paul und Paula (1974), we are struck by an obvious affinity in realistic terms, in that both display a similarly sparkling, endearing, direct personality; Edgar's boyish, witty and rather more forceful character has been translated into a more feminine, distinctly anti-intellectual one: Paula, nineteen years of age, is depicted as a strikingly attractive, erotic, impulsive, occasionally pert girl with great common sense and no inhibitions as regards offending against the rules of behaviour and speech conventions. She has two illegitimate children and by the end of the story is expecting the third, each from a different father. She lacks any academic ambitions or qualifications and is perfectly happy working in a supermarket.

Not only does Paula share Edgar's lively personality, she also follows him in her categorical rejection of compromise, her determination never to make concessions to reality and established society at the expense of her personal freedom and convictions. This attitude culminates in her choice of death rather than compromise: When she is expecting for the third time (now from Paul), her gynaecologist urges her to have her pregnancy discontinued:

Du bist doch kein Kind mehr. Es gibt eben Dinge, die nicht gehen. Du kannst nicht alles haben. Wenn du was von Philosophie verstehen würdest, würde ich sagen: Ideal und Wirklichkeit gehen nie übereinander. Ein Rest bleibt immer (87).

Yet Paula's decision stands: "Dann krieg ich's" (87). These last words of hers are somewhat modified by the commentator's ambivalent remark: "Jedenfalls sagt so die Legende", but re-inforced in their impact on us by the announcement: "Paula hat die Geburt des Kindes nicht überlebt". Paula gains her freedom through self-sacrifice; but self-sacrifice in her case is not synonymous with defeat and death in the sense of her being a victim, but with victory and life in a world unconstrained by time and space: Paula continues to live, in her child, in Paul's memory and love, as a projection of people's imagination.

If the genre of "Legende" can be defined as:

religiös erbauliche, volkstümliche Erzählung ... um
den irdischen Lebenslauf eines Heiligen ..., besonders
den Kampf glaubensstarker Menschen mit der Umwelt³⁰

then Paula may be described as a secularized saint, a near-mythological figure, last seen descending into "den nächsten Schacht der Untergrundbahn" (87): a modern Eurydice on her way to Hades.

The stylized, Utopian features are more pronounced still in the minor characters of the film story. Their very names make them resemble figures in a mediaeval play: "die Schöne", "der Kumpel", "der Hohlkopf". Each of them occupies one clearly defined function in the legend of Paul and Paula.

The idea of fate as the driving force behind the love story and its outcome adds to the overall impression of stylization in this text.

It is fate that makes the characters go through (predestined) motions, not unlike Kleistian marionettes, guided by a force which is stronger than that of society: to abandon oneself to this force is synonymous with self-liberation. Thus "die Frau" (Paul's wife), on being found out with her lover, has no other excuse to offer than the intervention of fate: "Ich hab das ja nicht gewollt mit dem Kerl. Es war Schicksal. Ich habe nicht dagegen angekommt" (25).

Paul at that time is still blind to the forces of fate and waxes furious. But he too is soon to be drawn into its magnetic field where self-realization is achieved through self-abandonment: "das gewollte Schicksal" (34). After their first night together Paula is "völlig abwesend" (45), as if sleep-walking, and somewhat later Paul's attraction to her is described as having the power of a magnet.

If in the 'Filmerzählung', realism nevertheless remains a powerful element in the overall picture of Paula, this element has all but faded away in the novel Legende vom Glück ohne Ende (1979). Any appeal as a lively individual has largely been lost (primarily because of the introduction of a rambling elderly narrator). Paula has now come fully to impersonate the forces and beauty and love - "eine idealische Gestalt", as Horst Haase puts it³⁹. She is described in terms clearly intended to stress the stylized at the expense of the realistic: "Paula war ein Bild von einer Frau, vielleicht ein Stück zu klein, aber sehr sinnlich"(10). Her beauty and sensuality are frequently referred to by the narrator (although for the reader they tend to remain intangible and unreal, as the narrator describes characteristics rather than character), as are her spontaneity, warmth,

directness and aesthetic sense (hence her first marriage to Collie, the handsome cashier at the fun-fair, 13); impatience and disdain come to the fore when Paula is confronted with self-importance, deviousness, meanness and injustice. She is an excellent dancer, commands "Herzensbildung" rather than "Schulbildung" (192), bases her decisions on instinct rather than intellect - in short, she is very much the Paula we know from the earlier film script, only a few years older now (in her mid-twenties), less a girl than a young woman and presented not as a three-dimensional character but as a likeness in a fading picture⁴⁰.

As in Legende von Paul und Paula, Paula's death is the result of free choice, in her doctor's words, "eine Frage der Selbstbestimmung" (151). It is worth noting that neither Edgar's nor Paula's death is actually described in the text: What matters is not the physical destruction of these individuals, but their having lived and died as free agents, determining their own fate (by remaining faithful to their ideals) and never opting for easy "alignment":

Sie (Paula) ist bis zuletzt bei vollem Bewußtsein gewesen. Sie hat nichts bereut. So war Paula. "Hätte" und "Wenn" gab es bei ihr nicht. Das war ihre große Stärke (10).

As in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., death has lost its harshness, as Paula continues to live: her story is told and retold and will remain a living legend. In keeping with her character and in contrast to Edgar, Paula treats death very seriously (164) and prepares for it with solemn ceremony (163).

VI

So far we have concentrated exclusively on the characters of Edgar and Paula, neither of whom, it has been argued, undergoes a development in the sense of achieving greater maturity, of reversing or adjusting views held by them at an earlier stage. But what about Paul who, after all, in the novel comes to be the central figure as his story continues after Paula's death: Does he qualify as an "idealistische Gestalt" in the way Paula does? Does he, like Edgar, remain uncompromisingly himself? Paul, it will become clear, does neither, but instead undergoes a development: In both versions of the story he emerges a different person from when he started. Are we then dealing with a "Bildungsroman" after all? Yes and no. Yes, because Paul is shown to be subject to an educational process. No, because the educational process in question is one not towards society but away from it. His is the story of a man who, by nature and upbringing, would not reject reality, but accept and adapt to it, but who learns, by painful experience, that what matters is not reality but the ideal. In his case one could therefore speak of an "Anti-Bildungsroman", a "Bildungsroman" in reverse.

To elaborate a little: Paul starts off as a well-aligned young man, perfectly assimilated to his social surroundings. Having graduated from university he walks straight into "eine schöne Stellung" (13), is married (in the passive!) by a beautiful girl who bears him a beautiful son. For three years he does more than his duty in the National People's Army: " ... brav wie ich war und auf Karriere aus, hab ich mich breitschlagen lassen" (18). He has planned not only his

own future but that of his son too:

Erstens die neue Wohnung, im Neubau. Zweitens die neue Einrichtung, nur vom besten. Drittens neue Sachen zum Ausgehen. Viertens sollte der Junge gut erzogen werden. Er sollte so früh wie möglich auf eine Spezialschule für Sport oder Russisch, je nachdem (19).

Looking back at this phase of his life, he comments:

Ich hatte mich nie zu entscheiden brauchen. Alles war immer schon vorentschieden, nehmen wir mein Studium. Alle nahmen an, ich war wild auf meine Fachrichtung. Keine Spur davon. Ich studierte, was mein Kumpel studierte. In der Schule war es angezeigt, überall gute Leistungen zu haben, möglichst sehr gute, weil an den Leistungen dein Grad an gesellschaftlichem Bewußtsein gemessen wird und an deinem Bewußtsein alles andere. Also hatte ich überall sehr gute Leistungen ... (37).

When Paula's child is killed in a traffic accident, Paul takes his first independent decision when going to Paula's door (73) which marks the first step in a process of growing self-discovery: Paul gets to know his own person, his own needs and learns to react to them; this in turn makes him more perceptive to the vibrations coming from others (115). With his love of Paula there goes an increasing identification with her views and life-style. When the siege outside her flat ends with his breaking her door, he has also opened up for himself the door to a new self, a self that sees through and rejects all compromise:

Ich bin mir vorgekommen wie ein Mensch, der sehr lange Zeit Kompromiß um Kompromiß geschlossen hat und der nun endlich seinem Feind Auge in Auge gegenübersteht

und ihm mit jedem Schlag zu verstehen gibt, daß es mit den Kompromissen vorbei ist, daß nun endlich klare Verhältnisse geschaffen werden (140).

Thus Paul, under the influence of Paula, has undergone a 'conversion' away from society. But he never ceases to be weak and vulnerable, a potential renegade and victim to external pressure to conform. Paula's death therefore leaves him utterly defenceless, and when Laura enters his life, a process of 'counterconversion' sets in: For fear of losing her, Paul is prepared to give way on all fronts: He avoids voicing any views that are opposed to hers (and there are a great number of them), adjusts his physical appearance to her wishes, adopts a strictly regular life style and finally returns to his old "Dienststelle" - in short, submits to a "totale Anpassung" (229). At this point, Paul has gone full circle, from total adaptation via total liberation back to total adaptation. When leaving the house in the morning to go to work he feels precisely the same as in pre-Paula days:

Er ist sich vorgekommen wie in alten Zeiten in der Singer, als seine Frau es war, die ihm nachwinkte. Sein Anzug ist noch derselbe gewesen, sein Hut auch, das Haus sah nicht viel anders aus, der Dienstwagen war noch derselbe, einschließlich des Fahrers. Paul: "Ich kam mir vor wie einer, der im Kreis gegangen ist." (239)

Yet, there is a spark of Paul's individuality left, which sets in motion a process of trying to restore the whole of this individuality and to shed the accumulated layers of superimposed views and habits. It is a painful process which brings Paul close to death (253); this he does escape by the skin of his teeth but he is left in a state of physical paralysis, utterly dependent on Laura's presence. Then this physical

dependence begins to arouse in him greater energies than he has ever shown before. Helped by neither Paula nor Laura, only by the faith in his ability to help himself demonstrated by his first wife (whom he visits in West Berlin), Paul gains new strength which finally enables him to make a miraculous escape. All searches are in vain: "Aber nirgendwo ist ein Paul mit Krücken oder auf Knien gesehen worden" (319). Another miracle has intervened to secure for Utopia a (very narrow) victory⁴¹. Where has Paul escaped to? Any answer would take us beyond the purview of the novel, which contains no hint as regards a socio-geographical alternative or a possible future for him. Admittedly, the narrator does indicate her own belief that Paul is still alive:

Meine Person glaubt, daß Paul auch heute noch diese Gewohnheit hat /i.e. occasionally provoking Laura on purpose/, wenn er noch am Leben ist, und meine Person ist fest davon überzeugt, daß das der Fall ist (288).

But, apart from expressing merely one person's private view, this comment does nothing to help us imagine where and how the - once again upright - Paul might be enjoying his newly gained freedom.

VII

To sum up, then, it seems justified to argue that characterization in Plenzdorf's works signals a progressive change of direction: away from a stance which would fit into the framework of socialist realism (i.e. in the original version of Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. of 1968) via a realism curtailed by stylization (the first published version of the same text (1972) as well as the "Filmerzählung" Die Legende von Paul und Paula) towards an unambiguously Utopian novel enriched by sufficiently strong realistic detail to give it socio-political topicality.

In terms of Plenzdorf's contribution to "Jeans Prosa" which to have introduced to the East German scene he has rightly been credited with⁴², it is noteworthy that his texts stand out from all others for featuring protagonists who are depicted neither as morally weak nor as ultimately prepared to be "aligned", thereby contrasting not only with their East German colleagues but also with such paradigmatic figures as Salinger's Holden Caulfield and Aksënov's Dimitri.

2.2 Utopia: a refuge for the weak

I

While there is no difference between Plenzdorf's protagonists and those about to be discussed in this section, regarding the factual outcome of their rebellion - none of them agree to be integrated into the society they find themselves at odds with - there is a fundamental difference in terms of the moral context they are depicted in. Plenzdorf's rebels are 'strong' characters; they are set to win a victory and their escape is a manifestation of this determination. Society, though stronger in terms of power under existing circumstances, is ultimately the loser in the struggle.

The 'weak' rebels, on the other hand, are portrayed as doomed to failure, provided they do not, at some future point beyond the scope of the story told, mend their ways. Their struggle ends in defeat, as the ultimate goal is assumed to be social integration and acceptance of an obligation to make a positive contribution towards a strengthening of their socialist society. In other words, these young rebels are the heirs to the familiar figure of the antagonist in socialist realist fiction of the fifties and sixties, subject to certain modifications due to an altered socio-political, economic and ideological environment.

Even in the sixties, the stock figure of the social outsider was beginning to lose its previous harsh outlines: no longer was he seen as a villain introduced to offset the virtues of the 'positive hero'

in terms of black and white, but was himself invested with qualities which made him appear in more realistic grey shades. Two prime examples from the early sixties are Tom Breitsprecher in Karl-Heinz Jakobs' Beschreibung eines Sommers (1961)⁴³ and Manfred Herrfurth in Christa Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel (1963)⁴⁴ - the two young (though not very young) engineers/scientists, intelligent, able, likeable and basically well-intentioned, yet morally weakened through a pre-occupation with their own personal happiness and career satisfaction and ... lacking^a sense of social responsibility. Their failure to integrate and co-operate fully is explained by reference to childhood and teenage experience. The thirty year-olds of 1960 were the fifteen year-olds of 1945, some of whom had suffered a severe shock when the world around them, the system of values and standards they had grown up with, suddenly crumbled. In self-defence they turned cynical and fiercely individualistic, rejecting all ideology and any appeal to their social and political conscience. Thus we are told about Tom Breitsprecher:

Der Faschismus hat ihn zum Zyniker gemacht. Es gibt viele, die aus dem Faschismus befreit herausgingen und sich sofort dem Sozialismus zuwandten. Beim Tom ist die Sache viel komplizierter⁴⁵.

This plea for understanding and tolerance towards one who has clearly offended against socialist mores and has shown no signs of regret, is re-echoed, albeit more subtly as well as more contentiously, in Wolf's book with regard to Manfred Herrfurth. Again, the young man's failure to commit himself to the ideology of the society he lives in is explained by the shock he received in his teens. But while in the

case of Tom Breitsprecher the chance of eventual 'reform' is never quite excluded (he agrees to go to Hungary and might conceivably return from there a more mature man), Manfred severs all bonds with his country and is thus lost beyond hope.

In comparison with the socialist realist works of the fifties, these two novels of the early sixties signal a change in their depiction of the 'antagonist' in very human rather than primarily ideological terms. Yet moral undertones and even a touch of contempt for the weak, the ideologically blind and recalcitrant, are still faintly present - not surprisingly, as an unambiguous socialist perspective remained a conditio sine qua non for any text to be published in the GDR. Officially this has never changed. Yet, in practice we find that a gradual, though by no means consistent and irrevocable process of relaxation regarding the application of this requirement did occur in the seventies.

The most noticeable development in the portrayal of the 'negative' rebel since about 1970 has been in terms of character motivation: By 1970, Hitlerism, in the lives of the young generation, had ceased to be a direct source of ideological frustration and consequent failure of the individual to accept East German society. Also, an escape to the capitalist West no longer represented a viable alternative or even an attractive one. For East Germany too could begin to boast of an impressive standard of living - the 'Wirtschaftswunderland' of the Eastern Bloc. Any problems of social integration encountered by the young could therefore be explained neither by harmful experience suffered under fascism nor by damaging influences

from the capitalist West and its fascination for the weak. The realization that accountability for the failure of young people to identify with East German society must consequently be seen to rest with that society itself (naturally within the limits drawn through the distinction between 'antagonistic' and 'non-antagonistic' problems) is clearly reflected in the characterization of 'negative' rebels of the seventies. Not surprisingly, therefore they are no longer as indispensable to the East German novel as they once were; nor do they play as substantial a part where they do appear. They rather tend to be marginal figures, evidence of a concession that even a socialist society - which, after all, does now admit to being still far from perfect - has its problems, whatever views one may choose to hold regarding their causes and possible solutions.

There is, in some instances, a fascinating and revealing ambiguity about their portrayal, where thoroughly sympathetic characteristics are presented in conjunction with expressions of unmistakable moral disapproval by 'positive' figures or even by the narrator/author himself. There are occasions when one cannot avoid an impression that such contradictions are deliberate so as to allow for all lines of interpretation being left open: anything ranging from open social criticism to a socialist credo.

The negative rebels' we are going to look at are: Tolja in Werner Heiduczek's Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit (1971), Jimmy in Heinz Kruschel's Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt (1976), Juliane al. Eteputete in the same novel, Klaus in Helfried Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an (1977) and Ernst in Karl-Heinz Jakob's Die Interviewer (1973)⁴⁶.

II

Tolja in Mark Aurel has the charm of the good-looking 'enfant terrible': a loafer, sponger on society, who fascinates the girl Yana. With Manfred Herrfurth in Wolf's novel he shares his field of study (chemistry) but none of the latter's enthusiasm for it. On the contrary, he chose to enrol in the subject merely in order to avoid military service, his real inclination being a more artistic one (architecture). He goes for soft options, holds an exaggerated sense of his own importance and is described as generally unstable. He lacks a positive aim in life, a sense of purpose, pride in achievement through hard work and sacrifice. His emotional insecurity and moral immaturity are explained by his family background - the petit bourgeoisie which socialism has not yet fully succeeded in overcoming. Tolja's father is the director of a small savings bank branch. He is obsessed with money, or more precisely with the correct handling of it, a pedant who humiliates his son by constantly suspecting him of dishonesty in financial transactions. This humiliation goes hand in hand with an exaggerated pride in his son's (imagined) academic achievements, as to the father these represent a rung up the social ladder he himself has failed to negotiate. It is made obvious to the reader that neither parent has taken advantage of the chances opened up by the new social order: both, father and mother, have remained self-centred, narrow-minded, materialistic, and unaware of the needs of their son, let alone those of society at large. Young Tolja, though flattered by his mother's blind love of him, thinks little of his parents:

Er machte sich darüber lustig, daß ich öfter zu meinen Eltern fuhr als er zu seinen. Aber ich glaube, hinter seinem Spott lag Sehnsucht nach einem anderen Zuhause. Er gab es nur nicht zu. Manchmal hatte er einen Stolz, der schon verrückt war. Aber wenn ich heute alles überdenke, so finde ich, es war kein Stolz. Er tat nur so. Im Grunde genommen war er unsicher und hatte Angst. Er brauchte immer jemanden, um sich vor sich selbst zu verstecken (63).

To conceal his emotional insecurity Tolja sports large sunglasses and rechristens himself "Tolja", his real name "Hans-Peter" sounding too common to his liking. To his girl-friend and temporary ally he gives the name of "Yana" rather than "Christiane". For a while, her warm, direct and yet also somewhat insecure personality breaks his isolation and makes him feel wanted and happy. Yet, while the girl continues to develop and mature, Tolja fails to outgrow his immature individualism and opposition to society, ultimately making a separation inevitable. Tolja is exmatriculated, left behind, depressed, weary, penniless, with little hope of ever achieving much in life: "Vielleicht gehe ich auf den Bau oder hoch zum Hafen," sagte er. "Es findet sich was." (147)

W. Heiduczek himself clearly attributes great importance to Tolja's being seen not as an outsider in East German society but as its integral part. Thus he stated in an interview in NDL⁴⁷:

Ich würde mich gern gegen die Behauptung wehren, Tolja sei als Außenseiter konzipiert. Er gehört zu unserer Gesellschaft und in unsere Gesellschaft wie jede andere Gestalt aus dem Buch - nur ist er anders ... Eigenwillige Charaktere stempeln wir zu schnell und gedankenlos als Außenseiter ab. Wir disqualifizieren sie und geben ihnen den Teil der Schuld, den wir lieber auf uns nehmen sollten.

Nevertheless, apart from personal charm which easily wears off, Tolja lacks any 'positive' qualities which could help to dispel our perception of him as a weak character trying to conceal his weakness from himself and others. An indefatigable collector of philosophical and pseudo-philosophical arguments that happen to strengthen his own case, he has armed himself with snippets from the Stoics of decadent Rome as well as from writers of (equally decadent) contemporary Western societies, though never publicly acknowledging his sources. Thus, at least indirectly, some alien influences are present to help explain Tolja's failure to adjust and grow up.

Compared with Edgar Wibeau, his contemporary, Tolja lacks vitality, originality, frankness, spontaneity, humour ... all the qualities which allow Plenzdorf to dispense with even the remnants of the socialist realist dialectic structure of 'positive' and 'negative' characters. Yet, in comparison with fictional characters of the sixties, Tolja does embody a striking innovation and was certainly perceived as such by East German critics and readers, as is evinced by the lively debate following his appearance on the literary stage⁴⁸: a character who, though weak, unsuccessful and liable to fall for alien ideological influences, is nevertheless part as well as the responsibility of the society in which he lives. Only, his ideals are false ones, his Utopia no more than a refuge for one unable to cope with the demands of real life in a socialist country.

III

Turning to Kruschel's novel Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt of 1976, we come to a work which (in contrast to Heiduczek's Mark Aurel) is clearly a product of the Honecker era, where twenty-one year-old Herbert Müller, alias Jimmy, a nineteen-seventies version of Tolja, displays obvious post-Edgarian features. Another bright young man, perceptive and sensitive, but extremely passive and unenterprising, frustrated by his parents, their lack of understanding and altruistic love of him, a product of a society which is becoming increasingly prosperous and materialist and dominated by those whose preoccupation with 'the cause' and their own role in its promotion blinds them to the immediate needs of those dependent on them:

Sehe ich doch an meinen Alten ... Die Kommunikation beschränkte sich auf einen Zettelverkehr: Mußte nach Dresden, bin in Polen, es dauert drei Tage, Sonntag in zwei Wochen kommt der Attaché zu Besuch. Die machten nicht mal Urlaub miteinander, der Erzeuger mit seinem Betrieb verheiratet, manchmal schlief er gleich im Büro und Frau Mama in irgendeiner Hauptverwaltung, Abschluß in einem afrikanischen Land. Cocktail in Habana, Verhandlung hier, shake hands dort, der Kühlschrank immer voll, die teuersten Geschenke aus dem Ausland für den lieben, armen Sohn, der unter unseren Verpflichtungen leiden muß, leider leiden muß, das Taschengeld kein Problem, nimm dir doch, wenn du brauchst, Herbert, was kann man schon für ihn tun, die Sache verlangt uns eben ganz (45).

Bitterness and resignation inform the conclusion young Jimmy draws for himself: "Wenn ich sie brauchte, waren sie nicht da oder hatten keine Zeit, meine Sorgen waren ihnen zu mickrig, gemessen an der großen Sache" (45).

Jimmy gives up a promising academic career; leaves the EOS on encountering problems "so philosophischer Art" (45); tries his luck "auf dem Bau" (46) which pleases him insofar as he can, at last, see with his own eyes the result of his labour. Yet, and here his inner weakness is beginning to show, he fails to make friends with his mates at work to whom he is no more than a "Spinner" (46). He is soon frustrated with the monotony of his work, but unfortunately fails to have by his side a Zaremba figure, an understanding, experienced personality commanding natural authority and respect. Jimmy's (as Edgar's) brigadier takes an instant dislike to this long-haired and obstreperous youth and, on the first opportunity that offers itself, gives him a good dressing-down, with the effect that Jimmy quits. He now restricts his activities to occasional money-making jobs, such as car-washing at a petrol station; even has a crack at burglary in his parents' neighbourhood. Thus, unlike the 'positive' rebels, the Jimmies in East German society gain no sense of identity through work but rather have their prejudices confirmed as regards their fellowmen's boundless materialism and careerism:

Die rafften, aber die leben gar nicht richtig, die müssen besitzen, Auto, Bungalows und Boot und den neuesten Fernseher mit Bedienung vom Sessel aus, die müssen ans Schwarze Meer reisen und sich ihre Bäuche unbedingt bulgarisch bräunen lassen, sie müssen Radeberger in einer politischen Bar trinken und sich auf einem Idiotenhügel bei Zakopane das Bein brechen (41).

Materialism and ruthless careerism appear to him the driving forces behind people's actions and behaviour:

Die Autobesitzer schimpfen über ihre Abteilungsleiter, die Abteilungsleiter über die Direktoren, aber wenn sie vor den Schreibtischen ihrer Vorgesetzten stehen, dann halten sie die Klappe, weil sie Angst haben. Wovor denn? Sie fürchten, vergessen zu werden bei der nächsten Prämie, Gehaltserhöhung oder Beförderung. Das ist doch pure Heuchelei (42).

Jimmy himself wants no more than he needs to live. Whenever possible he withdraws into his private world of dreams, lying on a mattress and listening to pop music: "Ich träume gern und fliege mir weg"⁴⁹. Dreams offer him the freedom he fails to find in reality, but it is merely a freedom from certain constraints (to make money, to succeed in a career, to find social recognition) and not a freedom for something: developing his personality, constructing a form of life worth living. Jimmy has something about him of an overgrown, an aging Edgar Wibeau: He has little patience with those no longer young (of a thirty-year-old he speaks disdainfully as "son'n Vater", 41, 43), but this derision lacks the youthful vigour it had with Edgar; after all Jimmy himself is twenty-one rather than seventeen. The same applies to his attitude regarding the world at large: While Edgar retains his sense of enterprise and curiosity, his freshness of vision and independence of judgment, Jimmy withdraws into a cosy state of world-weariness, resignation and self-deceit. This allies him with Tolja in Mark Aurel, as does his carefully concocted philosophy comprising ingredients from various miscellaneous sources, all of them alien or even opposed to socialism. Thus we are told of a diary he writes:

... halbvoll mit Bemerkungen, schönen Sätzen, unfertigen Sätzen, zusammengeklitterten Anschauungen, ein Ismus eigener Prägung, angereichert durch markante Sätze von Schopenhauer, Spinoza, und Kant, ja, Jimmy hat gelesen, hat herausgelesen, aufgepickt wie ein wählerisches Euhn die ihm genehmen Körner, und ist bei den Neomarxisten gelandet, hat sich eine Weltanschauung zusammengeklittert, die ziemlich verstruppt ist und deren Alternative lautet: entweder vereinigtes Menschengeschlecht oder vereinigtes Massengrab (46-7).

Amongst Jimmy's principles, derived from his unhappy personal background, is that of marriage being an outmoded institution, "einfach überhold und Asche", which for a while offers him an easy excuse for the occasional change in his sexlife; instead he propagates the "Großfamilie" and adopts a slogan supplied him by his rebellious contemporaries in the capitalist West: "Wer immer mit derselben pennt, gehört schon zum Establishment" (44). Yet when Jimmy fears *losing* Sabine whom he loves with the egoistic inflexible love of the weak for the strong, he soon changes his mind about marriage and becomes a defender of the principle of monogamy. His home-made philosophy is shown to have been but a crutch designed to fit his momentary needs and easily dispensed with if his personal circumstances change.

The relationship between Jimmy and Sabine develops along similar lines as that between Tolja and Yana (and in either case along the lines of the familiar socialist realist "Bildungsroman"): There comes, after an initial period of fascination, the point at which the girl begins to see through the young man's self-deceit, to identify as superficiality and immaturity what first looked to her like originality and freedom of thought and behaviour. This book too ends with the weaker character being left behind while the stronger moves towards social and personal fulfilment.

It is difficult to avoid the impression that, in the treatment of Jimmy by the narrator, there is something of the ambiguity mentioned earlier⁵⁰

i.e. an unsolved discrepancy between the portrayal of the actual figure (particularly in the section where it takes the form of a self-analysis by Jimmy himself) and the implicit or even explicit evaluation of his character by the narrator. On the one hand, we have a young person who, through no fault of his own and on the grounds of solid evidence, has come to despise society as materialistic, careerist and unconcerned with the well-being of individuals in need. On the other hand, we witness the narrator's rejection of this person in a tone that can only be described as arrogant; as for instance in the final comment on Jimmy's future in the National People's Army:

"das wird ihm schwerfallen und verdammt gut tun, er muß neu anfangen" (318). Will the end-product of this new beginning be another Dieter - well-aligned, tamed and boring?

IV

Jimmy has a female counterpart in Kruschel's novel, the ravishingly beautiful (73) doll-like Juliane, called Eteputete. Sabine knows her from the borstal and, on her own release, meets her on her first evening of freedom. However, the difference between the two girls is immediately apparent: Unlike Sabine, Juliane has failed to learn from her past experience, has not changed at all. Indeed, she is unable to learn as she refuses to face the truth about herself and others and instead takes refuge in self-deception and fantasy: "Ich bin bloß

anders als die anderen. Das ist es nämlich, und anders darf man eben nicht sein" (79). Any attempt at self-analysis is soon quashed by self-fabricated excuses:

Aber manchmal frage ich mich: Warum bist du so? Du kannst dich entrüsten, wenn einer klaut, und du klaust selber und entrüstest dich nicht. Meine Tat, so erkläre ich mir das, fand einen Tag später statt, ein neuer Tag ist ein neues Leben, eine neue Welt, an einem neuen Tage bin ich auch ein neuer Mensch, anders als am vorigen (82),

From the few facts we are given about her life we can gather that her problems are rooted in an unhappy family situation: Her parents are divorced, her mother has spoilt her, treated her like a toy as well as allowing herself to be dominated by her daughter:

Mam heiratet meinetwegen nicht wieder, dabei sieht sie richtig klasse aus, aber ich würde von ihr weggehen, wenn sie wieder heiraten sollte (83),

Juliane has never experienced warmth, understanding and a firm hand. Very early on in her life she withdrew into a fantasy world, refusing to grow up and face reality:

... ich bin still gewesen, habe mit Puppen gespielt und Märchen gelesen, ich war eine Prinzessin oder half einem verwunschenen Königssohn, das Mädchen und der Schwan ... (79),

On having become a petty thief, Juliane was sent to the borstal by her mother. There she resisted all attempts to help her and showed herself unable to make friends with anyone.

While Sabine, during her time in the borstal as well as during her probationary period, is honestly struggling to find her feet and build up a worthwhile life, Juliane is retreating ever further into her realm of cliché and illusion:

Aber morgen gehe ich nicht in die Fabrik, ich fühle mich elend und lese das neue Märchenbuch, das mir Mam geschenkt hat, indische Märchen, ich werde eine Himmelstänzerin sein und meinen Muschelprinzen suchen oder ein Betelblattkind, das sich von einem verzauberten Supermann lieben läßt (84).

V

As Tolja goes with Yana (in Mark Aurel) and Jimmy with Sabine (Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt), so does Klaus with Petra in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an⁵¹, all three unable to cope with social reality and taking refuge with a girl stronger than themselves. Like his fellow sufferers, Klaus - not quite eighteen yet when he meets Petra (36) - makes a point of looking different: " ... und da, kam er an, in so einem ollen Batikhemd, reichlich vergammelt sah er aus" (29), "wie ein Penner" (36). He ^{had}long hair until his father had cut it off while he was asleep (36). He is described as highly sensitive (taking slugs from the pavement to the front-garden to protect them from getting killed, (56)), vulnerable ("Er kann sich nicht schütteln. An ihm bleibt alles kleben", 55), imaginative, artistic: He draws and paints and relies very much on his eyes: "Sehen für ihn war das größte. Sehen war noch größer als Malen" (35).

Klaus's problems too stem from his family background: He has grown up with the feeling that he is the family failure (36), his father being the boss of a firm, his mother a teacher and his sister a student of medicine while he works as an apprentice on a building site. Having observed his mother's unqualified worship of his father, he has come to dislike intensely all forms of slavish obedience to authority, and he himself makes a point of never taking authority seriously. In the course of the story he has three collisions with representatives of authority: two of them end harmlessly (43, 57), while one gets him into prison for having obstructed the police in the carrying out of their duty (119).

In contrast to Tolja and Jimmy, Klaus neither subscribes to any particular (capitalist orientated) philosophy nor does he nurture any resentment against East German society as such. In fact, on having been taken to the police station by two irate members of the People's Police, whom he had infuriated by cheeky remarks, he even declares, after the event, that they were really right and merely doing their duty: "Irgendwie haben sie recht, sagte Klaus mit einemmal. ... Wie sollen sie denn wissen, wer ich bin? ... es gibt doch genug von der Sorte, die alles demolieren müssen" (57). It is therefore fair to assume that even after his last encounter with the police at the end of the book he will admit, at least to himself, that they had a point (he had got stopped by the police five times one evening, the fifth time he had hit out, 119).

What, then, will the future hold in store for him? Certainly his prospects are much brighter than those of Tolja, Jimmy and Eteputete,

although there is no explicit reference to any future developments in the text. Most likely, his faith in Petra will be restored; he will bear no grudge against society; Petra will marry him and achieve her minimum target of three children; he may be able to take up drawing again, possibly as a city planner - his pre-occupation with urban development and the preservation of older houses (46) has always been noticeable. Old houses, we are told, appeal to him in a similar way as old people do, both of whom he regards as underestimated in their value for society:

Aus einem Riesenstapel Zeichnungen kramte Klaus ein paar Skizzen, auf denen er seine Vorstellungen vom Zusammenleben festgehalten hatte. Da stand das Altersheim neben dem Kindergarten und der Schule. Und es gab Bäume und schattige Ecken mit Bänken und Spielplätzen. Alle Bauten waren miteinander verbunden. Wer in seinem Altersheim lebte, würde nie das Gefühl haben, abgeschoben und isoliert worden zu sein (48).

Klaus, therefore, is a borderline case, earmarked neither as clearly 'positive' nor as 'negative', another indication that by the mid- to late seventies, the division between the two categories has ceased to be of particular interest to writers: Scape-goats must now be found within socialist society itself.

VI

The most striking instance of ambiguity of treatment regarding a 'negative rebel' occurs in the portrayal of fifteen-year-old Ernst Radek in Karl-Heinz Jakob's Die Interviewer (1973)⁵², a novel which received remarkably little attention in the West⁵³. Here an unambivalently sympathetic treatment of an intellectually able, fair-minded, sensitive but totally lonely, disillusioned and embittered youngster fails to tally with an equally sympathetic picture of those to be blamed for his mental state. In contrast to Kruschel, Jakobs never deviates from his maxim not to comment but merely to describe⁵⁴. The reader is left with the impression that the various episodes, centering around various protagonists, cannot all be accommodated in any one interpretational framework.

The 'Ernst chapters', as one might call them (i.e. Chapters 4, 13, 15) convey a perfectly coherent picture of a teenager determined to break away from his parents and their society and, having consistently followed the "Weg nach unten" (78), to reach the very bottom of the social system: "unten",

Das ist, wenn keiner mehr Rechte an meinem Leben hat
 ..., das ist, wenn ich keinem mehr nützlich bin, das
 ist, wenn ich zu einem Hindernis geworden bin, das
 beiseite geräumt werden muß, das ist, wenn ich keinen
 mehr habe, der diesen Weg mitgeht, wenn ich das
 erreicht habe, bin ich ganz unten angelangt.

Ernst's motives strongly resemble those of Jimmy in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt: disappointment with his parents, their lack of interest, understanding and love, their pre-occupation with their

career and concomitant material gains: "Denn ich brauche keinen Kühlschrank und keinen Fernseher wie ihr ... ich brauche kein Auto, ich will niemanden kommandieren wie ihr, und ich will nicht von irgendwelchen Chefs kommandiert werden"(79). Like Jimmy he has observed how social success depends on loyalty to the existing hierarchical social structure, on bossing those on the rungs below and crawling to those above: "Der eine schikaniert den anderen, ... jeder hat nur im Sinn, höher zu kommen, damit er weniger schikaniert wird und gründlicher andere schikanieren kann" (77). Neither Ernst's father (a psychologist) nor his mother (an industrial manager) has access to Ernst's real feelings and thoughts. At sixteen, Ernst has reached a point where it is difficult to envisage any rapprochement towards his parents. Nor is there anyone else in his life - teacher, classmate, girlfriend, party functionary - even partly to fill this gap, to break through the wall that separates him from society. Ernst is certainly the loneliest of the young rebels in the texts discussed here⁵⁵.

The boy's "Weg nach unten" starts with his escape from home, which he knows will only be temporary and is meant primarily as a demonstration of his determination to go his own way:

Macht Euch keine Sorgen um mich, ich finde meinen Weg
 ... ich fürchte, Ihr findet Mittel und Wege, mich
 wieder an Euch zu ketten. Wenn das geschieht, werdet
 Ihr aber wissen, daß ich dagegen bin (215),

As expected, Ernst's escape soon ends: He is caught loafing, handed over to a borstal and promptly returned to his parents. By then, all

meaningful communication between the two sides has stopped, and any exchanges of words serve the one function of trying to ^{the better of} get the opponent. Ernst's plans remain unchanged: he will not avail himself of the educational system: " ... ich reiße noch die zehnte Klasse runter und geh dann als ungelernter Arbeiter" (229); he will not try to make his own living (263); he will not join his parents' social world, whatever the consequences. And while he is still tied to them he will beat them at their own game by seeming to accept their educational principles and commandments and then proceeding to demonstrate their inherent illogicality and untenability. His father soon realizes that his own 'attacks' are no more than defensive measures and anything but convincing, while his mother has never even begun to see the real nature of the problem or to understand her husband's and son's behaviour.

In purely quantitative terms, Ernst is a minor character in the novel. What is revealing, however, is the fact that the two 'positive' young characters in the book - the teenager Lore Baumann and Maria Schlaf - are given considerably less attention and space and never achieve a three-dimensional presence. This invariably suggests to the reader that the author's real concern was with Ernst and not with his rather lifeless contemporaries whose function appears to be that of a foil for the rebel as well as a concessionary gesture towards the requirements of socialist realism.

Lore Baumann is an amateur actress, allegedly of great talent, who is introduced (seen through Radek's, the father's eyes) as:

Tochter mit knabenhaftem Charme, deren Gesicht, über und über mit Sommersprossen bedeckt, Übermut und Melancholie ausdrückte, die klug und wild zu sein schien (10).

After this introduction we learn little more about her than that she is prepared to give up a brilliant future career as an actress in order to fulfil her overwhelming desire to be "made a woman" - of all men by Radek whom she has selected after a careful scrutiny of other possible candidates (61). Lore remains a cliché figure, hardly suited, so it would seem, to allow the author "in einer höchst normalen Weise von Sexualität zu sprechen", as the East German critic Heinz Plavius explains her function in the novel⁵⁶. Nor is there any compatability between Ernst and Maria Schlaf who, we are told, causes her father some problems (124). She reads Clausewitz (125) and raves about the old days when men were still men, "eine Generation von Giganten" (128), as opposed to her own time which is populated by such spineless weaklings as Ernst's father.

Compared to these figures with their childish dreams, Ernst stands out as a serious, sensitive, clear-headed and strong-willed individual who suffers deeply from lack of love and understanding and is desperately trying to find his own way in life, in the midst of an uncaring, uncomprehending, hypocritical and materialistic society. Yet, there is not the slightest indication in the novel that this is the way the narrator/author wants us to see him. Is he meant to represent another Edgar Wibeau, a voice openly and, to a certain extent at least, justly criticizing society? Are we to take seriously his accusation of his parents as "Angehörige einer käuflichen Schicht", i.e. the intellectuals

- an accusation which so deeply shocks Dr. Wohro, the well-meaning and experienced director of the borstal he is briefly consigned to: "Ihr Sohn hat unsere gesicherten Erfahrungen mit Jugendlichen über den Haufen geworfen ... er ist hochbegabt, aber von extremer Denkweise" (256-7). If we are (and there is no indication to the contrary either), then a critical attitude towards almost all the other characters in the book is the inevitable consequence.

Jakobs' critics have not been unaware of these discrepancies. Those in East Germany, in spite of some reservations regarding the author's refusal to supply an objective evaluative framework, have tended to accept his own word that all characters have to be seen and judged in the light of an underlying irony⁵⁷. Eva Kaufmann⁵⁸ even speaks of a strong humorous element, particularly in the many dialogues where two interlocutors utterly fail to communicate with and understand each other:

Das reiche Instrumentarium komischer Mittel dient dazu, kenntlich zu machen, inwiefern die Gestalten, oft in Details psychischer Reaktionen oder Spracheigentümlichkeiten, unausweichbaren Lebensproblemen zu ihrem Schaden auszuweichen versuchen. In zahlreichen Dialogen ... wirken Menschen dadurch komisch, daß sie krampfhaft über die zwischen ihnen schwelenden Spannungen und offenen Fragen hinwegzureden versuchen (101).

Western critics have praised the author's "endgültigen Verzicht auf die monokausale Allwissenheit"⁵⁹. But the question remains whether deeply disturbing revolt against adult society by a figure of Ernst's calibre is not simply stripped of its tragic credibility if retrospectively it is interpreted in the light of irony or even "humour". The very fact that Jakobs himself selected one of the 'Ernst chapters' for independent publication in Stefan Heym's anthology Auskunft (at a time

preceding the publication of the book as a whole)⁶⁰ suggests that a more literal interpretation of this character might be better suited to the author's underlying intention.

Support for this approach can be derived from Jakob's¹ most recent novel Wilhelmsburg (1979)⁶¹, which failed to be accepted by East German publishers and consequently appeared only in the West. Here all non-committal irony has been shed in favour of a tone of all-pervading sadness: (in looking back at his life) an elderly man realizes that he has never had the courage of his convictions, that cowardice has prevented him from ever being himself. This has cost him the love and, ultimately, the life of his daughter Therese, a highly sensitive, scrupulously honest girl who, not unlike Ernst, would have wished her father to reveal to her some of his fears and weaknesses. Her isolation even exceeds Ernst's, and her efforts to break through it are exhausted in one final - unsuccessful - attempt at communication when she sends out letters, "wie im Fieber" (201), to all people whom she knows to be wronging others. The letters go to a whole cross-section of society, from her coal-dealer to the President, and include the author whose most famous creature, Holden Caulfield, has become a symbol of the young social outsider of her generation. The letter runs:

Sehr geehrter Herr Salinger, ist es wirklich wahr, daß es Menschen gibt, die kleine Kinder, die arglos in einem Roggenfeld spielen, davor bewahren möchten, daß sie in den Abgrund stürzen? Und wenn es solche Menschen gibt, warum findet man sie dann so schwer? Ich habe noch keinen kennengelernt, der so wäre wie der, von dem Sie erzählen, der abstürzende Kinder auffängt. Ich glaube, Sie haben ihn sich ausgedacht, weil Sie selbst einen solchen Jungen nicht kennen, aber wünschen, daß (202).

Therese in Wilhelmsburg commits suicide. Her father retreats into silence: "Er sprach nicht mehr, nicht einmal mit mir" (271).

Ernst, in Die Interviewer, is simply dropped as a character: the camera shifts away from him, who defiantly and relentlessly pursues his strategy of passive resistance, to his parents: a bedroom scene of dubious taste during which Radek convinces his wife that the best way of overcoming their present plight is to have another child ("ob wir uns noch ein Kind anschaffen?", 274). The reasons are simple and sufficiently convincing for his wife who believes in the over-riding virtues of rational argument:

"... ein Baby würde uns beide verjüngen, ich fühle mich schon alt ...

Ich möchte mich noch einmal über eine große Sache freuen können, ich lebe lustlos ...

Ich möchte, daß wir uns wieder liebhaben" (274)

Not a word about Ernst, his problems, his feelings, his possible future. Are we really to give equal moral weighting to and preserve equal ironical detachment from Ernst on the one hand and his social environment on the other? Or should we not rather see the earlier novel as the product of the author's attempts to comply with a whole network of inner and outer constraints (the former including what has come to be called "Selbstzensur") yet giving artistic expression to at least some of the contradictions he knows to exist around him? The later novel seems to justify our coming down in favour of the second alternative. This would make Ernst a character of quite some affinities with Edgar Wibeau and his peers. With the difference that his revolt takes a

much more aggressive form, as his resentment of attitudes towards him springs from not merely a sense of discomfort and unease but a hurtful feeling of being rejected. Equally, his revolt takes the form not of spontaneous action but of a carefully structured scheme of passive resistance based on the dialectic belief: "Ich ... bin stark, Ich will nicht siegen" (13), which invites comparison with Edgar's much more naive self-observation, "Ich Idiot wollte immer der Sieger sein" (147)⁶².

VII

The 'weak rebel', then, is a figure of transition and a certain ambiguity: It marks the transition between the 'negative hero' of the fifties and sixties, the 'strong rebel' to be found only in Plenzdorf's works, and the 'positive rebel' whose rebellion ultimately leads to an acceptance of social reality (to be discussed in the next Section). The ambiguity frequently surrounding the 'weak rebel' springs from the incompatibility between a thoroughly sympathetic and convincing characterization and an ultimate moral condemnation (whether explicit or implicit) by the narrator and his 'positive' characters. This makes the 'weak rebel' a gauge for the dilemma of authors unable to free themselves from constraints which are beyond their control.

2.3 Utopia: a temporary vacation from reality

I

An escape to Utopia without reference to an intended or actual return to (social) reality is not something which young protagonists in East German fiction are normally granted. This would be counter to literature's social, moral and generally didactic role. The norm for young literary rebels is rather an escape of a temporary kind which ends with a safe return to the collective and thus fits the well-tried pattern of the "sozialistische Bildungsroman", always allowing for certain modifications to match the change of climate in cultural policies after 1971.

The 'positive rebels', as we might call them to distinguish them from the 'negative rebels' in the previous Section, go through a phase of rejection of adult conventions, values, and beliefs coupled with sheer boredom with life in general. They dream of change, of adventure, of freedom from routine and pressures, of romantic lives in exotic places. We, the readers, are invited to see this as a natural reaction of the intelligent, sensitive, imaginative and enterprising young person to an increasingly well-ordered and well-to-do society where originality and indiluted idealism are not always easily accommodated: Undoubtedly the reflection of a positive response by authors to Erich Honecker's invitation to bring out into the open of literary discussion any 'non-antagonistic' problems that might previously have remained concealed.

It is important to see that nowhere in these works is there an intended indictment of the socialist system, but merely an appeal to society to become yet more tolerant and understanding towards those of its members whose natural development involves a period of rebelliousness and protest. In a number of cases, the 'positive rebel' is the counterpart to one of the 'negative rebels' of the previous Section (i.e. from Mark Aurel, Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt and Ich fange mit dem Anfang an). We are not left in any doubt which of each pair is to stand in the limelight of attention, although readers may well find their interest rather more strongly engaged by the 'negative' foil - a reflection of the perennial problem that the villain tends to be more fascinating than the hero.

Two variants of the 'positive rebel' can be identified, these being by no means mutually exclusive⁶³. Firstly, there is the youngster who escapes from his accustomed life, risks or even rejects a promising academic career (at EOS or university) planned for him by parents, teachers etc. and opts for a menial (often blue-collar) job. The exposure to work and working conditions nearer the grass roots helps him to sort himself out, to prove his worth and to discover his own identity and place in society, so that he emerges with a higher level of moral and social awareness and ready to be integrated into adult society as its responsible and fulfilled member: a truly socialist experience.

Secondly, there is the young person who escapes from job or home out of a longing for freedom, for the exotic and romantic. While travelling, or rather hitch-hiking, usually abroad, he widens his horizon

through a variety of adventures and experiences, discovers the limitations placed on such a life and learns to accept the fact that dreams cannot last forever. Here too the final outcome is integration into adult society.

The first variant is found in the following works: Werner Heiduczek, Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit (1971), Joachim Walther, Zwischen zwei Nächten (1972), Klaus Gerisch, Das Jahr und Katrin (1972), Helmut Kruschel, Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt (1976), Helfried Schreiter, Ich fange mit dem Anfang an (1977), Dorothea Kleine, eintreffe heute (1979)

II

The very first of our texts that came out in the seventies and focussed on young people's problems in East German society was in fact Werner Heiduczek's narrative Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit. It was published in 1971 and, like innumerable stories of the sixties and seventies, was doubtlessly indebted to Christa Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel: a love story, set in the sixties, where love ultimately founders on the inability of the man to mature, to accept compromise, to integrate, thus forcing the girl to break with him and to face the future without him.

The girl, Christiane Trauzettel but nicknamed "Yana" by her boy-friend "Tolja", convalesces at home after a five-week stay in hospital and is

waiting to be sent on to a sanatorium to recover completely. Though physically still weak, she begins to work through in her mind the experience that lies behind her: her first love, Walter, the ever-reliable student of mathematics, the rationalist and believer in the powers of science and technology (14), the pillar of the Party and strong advocate of its higher education reform (43); then came other, more superficial love affairs (13) until finally Tolja appeared on the scene. His impression on her was instant, as he was 'different' from the rest: dark sunglasses (23), long slim hands (44), a passionate lover, oversensitive, egocentric and arrogant (60), intolerant of others' weaknesses (25), quick-witted, crazy-mannered and endlessly quoting from the philosopher Marcus Aurelius as if the ideas were his own (63). Interestingly, Tolja, like Edgar Wibeau, attempts to impress his girl-friend by trying to draw her likeness (98).

Yana describes her life as a very protected one which never required an independent decision from her:

Bis in die zwölfte Klasse hinein habe ich überhaupt sehr naiv vor mich hin gelebt. Ich brauchte mich um nichts zu kümmern. Alles hatten mir die Eltern abgenommen: Kindergarten, Oberschule, Jugendweihe, erweiterte Oberschule, ABF. Selbst das Chemiestudium habe ich zum Teil deswegen gewählt, weil mein Vater Chemiker war. Als kleines Kind hatte ich immer mit seinen Reagenzgläsern gespielt. Ich konnte meinen Eltern blind vertrauen. Sie machten schon das Richtige für mich. Wir hatten uns an diesen Zustand gewöhnt (80-1).

At the same time, Yana feels somewhat deprived of parental love when she compares herself to her younger sister who has music lessons and appears to be getting greater attention:

Ich habe überhaupt den Eindruck, daß sie zu meiner Schwester anders sind. Nicht, daß sie mich hintansetzen. Ich weiß selbst nicht, was das ist. Ich glaube, sie kümmern sich einfach mehr um sie ... Sie nehmen sich mehr Zeit als damals bei mir. Und ich wünschte manchmal, ich wäre nach meiner Schwester geboren (18).

As her parents had to be away from home a great deal during her childhood ("Auf der Parteischule oder auf Lehrgängen", 18), Yana was looked after by her grandmother from Poland, a devout Catholic who even arranged for her granddaughter's clandestine christening, to the deep annoyance of her parents who regarded Christianity as detrimental to young persons' mental development (20).

Yana feels overprotected as well as insecure. This drives her away from her parents and eventually into Tolja's arms. Tolja needs her as a source of strength, he challenges hitherto untapped strengths in her, in total contrast to the men she had known before who had always adopted a protective attitude towards her (24): "Tolja war ein zutiefst unglücklicher Mensch. Er brauchte mich. Und ich fühlte mich stark genug, für zwei zu leben" (89)⁶⁴. What Yana's parents and teachers tend to criticize in her, Tolja admires: her tendency to dream rather than to think, to work only sporadically and to rely on others for guidance and direction, to act impulsively rather than on rational deliberation. Such as when she refused an offer to study at Leningrad because she was afraid of leaving her boyfriend (Walter) for such a long period of time - a decision she disapproves of herself in retrospect: "Und ein Jahr später ging ich bereits mit einem anderen Jungen nachts durch die Stadt und fand es gar nicht sonderbar" (32). She is forced to compare her own weakness of mind with her mother's

inner strength, who gave up a much loved career as an actress in order not to endanger her marriage to Yana's father, yet now states with gentle firmness, that were she faced with the same dilemma at the present, she would not hesitate to sacrifice marriage to career (57). Yana is aware of her own immaturity in talking to her mother, her desire to be protected ("manchmal möchte ich in sie zurückkriechen", 57) but fails to think the issue through and to draw her conclusions.

Tolja, himself even more insecure and volatile, adores these qualities in her, trying to make her see them as marks of superiority to others (whom he calls "pygmies", an expression significantly taken over by Yana while she is under Tolja's spell (60) but later when she has freed herself from his influence (144) applied by her to Tolja himself). Tolja praises her "spontaneity" (59), encourages her egocentricity and irrational behaviour and dissuades her from applying herself to her studies. She begins to adopt his life pattern, wears sunglasses indoors (105), falls behind in her work, resorts to cheating (81) while also trying to rescue Tolja from being exmatriculated for lack of application: "Ich glaubte damals noch, ich könnte ihn erziehen" (83).

Yana stubbornly continues to believe in Tolja's extraordinariness and genius in spite of warnings from teachers and friends as well as her own (half-) realization: "daß Tolja in seinem Leben außer dem Abitur noch nichts zustande gebracht hatte" (85). Even when he lies to her - declaring that he has passed his examination when, in fact, he has been exmatriculated - she makes a desperate attempt to remain loyal to him while becoming increasingly disloyal to herself:

... ich hatte keine Kraft mehr. Ich spürte immer deutlicher, zwischen uns ging alles kaputt, und wollte es doch nicht wahrhaben.

Ich begann überhaupt immer gegen mein eigenes Wissen zu leben (122).

Inevitably, there comes the time when she not only sees through Tolja but also acts on her own insight. She leaves him. However, the strain is too great. She collapses in the lab, is taken to hospital and on returning home, begins to think about and write down her own story. The book ends with her decision that, rather than go on to convalesce in a sanatorium, she will now face life and return to her studies, as she is beginning to become a burden to others (124), feels strong enough to take her life into her own hands and has taken to heart the lesson taught her by a fellow-patient in hospital: "Aus jedem Leben läßt sich etwas machen"(11).

Thus we have the story of a young girl whose sense of identity and social belonging is disturbed through a variety of influences (family background, character, relationships), who for a while appears to be losing control over herself and her life, spoils her career prospects, but then, with the support of the collective (family, friends and teachers) emerges from the crisis as a stronger, more mature, more aware person, ready to tackle life in a newly gained spirit of social responsibility which is the complement of greater self-awareness. She has learnt to accept that life is not all excitement, extravagance, splendour, and that in her search for "happiness" (128), she will have to accept - as everybody else - a certain element of routine, of ordinariness which is merely the other side of mastering one's life:

Überhaupt glaube ich, etwas in jedem Leben ist Gewöhnung. Vielleicht ist es nicht das richtige Wort. Vielleicht müßte man sagen: "fertig werden". Entweder ich schaffe es, oder ich werde selbst geschafft. So dicht beieinander liegen das Außer-gewöhnliche und das Primitive (127).

III

Only one year after the publication of Heiduczek's story and simultaneously with Plenzdorf's first text (1972), there appeared two East German novels on the same topic of rebellious youngsters. In both cases, the dilemma is resolved by means of an acceptance of social reality.

The first of these is Joachim Walther's Zwischen zwei Mächten (1972), an ambitious attempt on the part of a young author to continue along the lines of Christa Wolf's model while also experimenting with modern narrative techniques, the use of which, in the East German context, still required some boldness. The characters of particular interest here are the protagonists in the main plot (the couple Alexander and Christa) and a minor figure in a subplot (fifteen-year old Reinhold). Although the former are long beyond teenage, they are still 'young' in the sense defined earlier, i.e. they are still about to face decisions that will shape their future lives and attitudes and require a process of maturation and inner growth. Both are shown to have their own contrasting but complementary background of emotional insecurity, tension and disillusionment.

Alexander's background is the subject of a detailed account⁶⁵. Conceived on the morning of the outbreak of World War II (the fruit of his father's fascist inspired megalomania and his mother's lethargic submission to his whims), he grows up - an utterly unheroic boy - amongst mindless supporters of Hitler. Being deprived of natural affection and warmth and a constant disappointment to his father, he builds up for himself an illusory world where only he remains the winner:

... dort [i.e. in his depressingly petit-bourgeois and stuffy home surroundings] genoß Alexander: Nestwärme. Die bei Strafe zu schätzen ihm befohlen war. Wahrheit und Gerechtigkeit. Ordnung und Sauberkeit. Wehe, wenn du, dann der Kohlenklaub. Alexander spielte draußen: am liebsten Krieg. Blecherne Stukas Tanks He 111 Zimmersoldaten Burgen (mit Falltüren) standen ihm in genügender Menge zur Verfügung. Er spielte so lange, bis alles tot war. Bei ihm gab es keine Sieger. Außer ihm (73).

When it comes to the real situation where his father expects him to throw stones at a mentally handicapped girl ("so was müßte man". (75)) he *dodges* it and learns to tell lies:

Alexander hatte Zeit, durch das Gestrüpp von Wahrheit und Lüge zu irren. Er fand nicht durch damals, er entschied für die Lüge: Alexander wollte ohne Schläge leben (74).

In 1945, both Alexander's parents die under humiliating circumstances. He goes to live with an uncle. The uncle had spent two years in a concentration camp, then works for a children's theatre (89) and in 1947 dies while on the stage, leaving Alexander to wonder what sense there had been in his life and death (91). There follow the years in the

orphanage, where the boy's sense of insecurity increases, frustration at his lack of recognizable personal identity grows fiercer. The eleven-year-old is rebuked for wanting to break out of the anonymous crowd by moving his bed to the window and pinning photos on the wall (57-8). On leaving school he enrolls on a design course: from now on it is he who wants to shape his environment rather than allowing the environment to shape him. However, high academic achievement fails to secure recognition on his entering the world of work. Set-backs are experienced as personal slights, the young man becomes increasingly self-centred and disillusioned:

Alexander wollte alles allein schaffen. Wollte alles ganz anders machen als die anderen. Etwas beweisen wollte er. Sein Name sollte etwas bedeuten. Von sieben Jahren an nur immer ... und wollen wir mal alle ..., immer das Wir mit freundlicher Tantenstimme, und das seit Onkel Ryls Tod, zwei Jahre nach dem Tod seiner Eltern. Immer wurde alles gemeinsam getan, die Leistung des einzelnen war am Ende nicht mehr ablesbar (64).

Alexander's frustration and insecurity are heightened by finding his trust abused. He withdraws completely (79), ignoring his own loneliness and treating others merely as tools to help him achieve success. His ruthlessness and lack of self-discipline lead to demotion and transferment to a different department. It is only on meeting Christa in the waiting room at a railway station⁶⁶, that Alexander finds himself thinking not only about the here and now but about the future - the shell of isolation and despair is beginning to crack: "Es gab wieder ein Dann. Alexander begann, Zukünftiges zu denken" (94). At this point his story merges with that of Christa who, too, has gone through years of insecurity and disillusionment. Only in her case the cause has been an

unhappy marriage - a marriage to someone who was determined to deny the significance of any emotions, of anything irrational. Christa's fascination (she comes from a working class background, 111) with this seemingly unconventional person soon turns into despair at his lack of feeling for her, the gradual impoverishment of their relationship. Her efforts to change the situation by a pregnancy fail, an abortion leaves her feeling utterly lonely, she enters a deep crisis (108). Supported in every sense by her colleagues she immerses herself into her work. While Alexander is driven into extreme egoism, she takes the opposite route of living for others:

Sie wollte nicht mehr den Traum vom wohlgebahnten mühelosen Leben. Sie wollte tätig sein, wollte Spannungen ins Gleichgewicht bringen, da ihr Stabilität immer aus Spannungen zu kommen schien ... Sie wollte etwas, was von Nutzen wäre für andere, sich selbst wünschte sie den lebenslangen Zweifel daran, fertig zu sein. Fortwährend entstehen: Das war schon so ein neuer Traum von ihr (114).

When Christa and Alexander meet, it is she who brings the greater strength into their relationship, while he is still struggling to find solid ground under his feet. The story's main events - during two nights and the day between them - centre around their deliberations whether Alexander should accept his firm's offer to spend a year in Moscow. On the one hand, this is an obvious indication that his professional qualities are at last being publicly recognized. On the other hand, it means a separation from Christa who is pregnant and is held in Berlin by her work. The dilemma between private wishes and social responsibility, between egoism springing from insecurity and openness to the wider needs of the collective, including Christa, himself and

the baby to be born - an openness which can only result from a sense of security and trust - is resolved in favour of the latter: Alexander will go to Moscow, Christa will stay in Berlin, the year of separation will serve to make their love for each other grow and assist their integration into the society which they now, in all freedom, accept as their own:

Christa und Alexander in dieser Zwei-Welten-Stadt,
 sie hier, die anderen drüben. Sie wissen, warum
 sie hier sind: Sie halten ihre Welt für die bessere
 Welt (193).

Once again the affinities with C. Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel are striking. They are strongest in the characters of Alexander/Manfred: members of the same generation and with similarly demoralizing childhood experiences which have left them feeling insecure and tempted to resort to arrogance and egoism for self-protection; they both compensate emotional vulnerability through academic excellence, misinterpret occasional set-backs as personal and intentional slights and turn their backs on society not realizing that it is they who suffer most in the process; eventually they both meet a girl of superior moral strength and warmth of feeling who wishes nothing more than to bring her misguided lover back into the fold of society.

This is where the analogy ends and where each story can be seen to be a product of its respective decade of publication: Manfred fails to return from West Berlin and Rita refuses to follow him there (a real possibility in the early summer of 1961); Alexander never entertains such a thought and remains accessible for salvation. While in Wolf's

novel, Manfred Herrfurth, however sympathetically portrayed, still represents the 'negative' hero, Walther's story manages without such a figure; West German society no longer represents a genuine alternative and socialist society has grown strong enough to cope with its own problems and is proving its worth.

There is, in Walther's book, a third figure, albeit a marginal one, who deserves our attention. Not that fifteen-year-old Reinhold Porsch can (as yet) fully qualify as a rebel, he is too acquiescent for that, too little upset by his life and environment. Nevertheless he is distinctly recognizable as a budding member of the 'jeans generation' heralded in that same year (1972) by young Edgar Wibeau. Reinhold does not run away from home, or quit school or work; but he has youthful longings, and minor clashes with his parents about his unconventional hair-style, his predilection for loud pop music ("diese gräßliche Schlagermusik", 168) and his disinclination to work harder than absolutely necessary. He would welcome being treated rather more as an adult than a child, for instance being told the truth about his mother's illness rather than being fobbed off with mysterious hints:

Irgendwas mit dem Unterleib, hat er gehört, als wenn was dabei wäre, na ja, die lieben Eltern. Die könnten überhaupt bald mal aufhören, ihn wie ein Kind zu behandeln, so mit Kleiner und Zeigefinger und so (29).

The monotony and narrowness of his parents' lives bores and slightly depresses him. His mother seems to spend her time at home forever washing up in the kitchen, merely emerging occasionally to tell him off or send him to buy beer for his father. His father, a mechanic who leaves

the house every morning at 6.15 a.m. and spends his evenings drinking beer and watching television, keeps reminding the boy, somewhat reproachfully, that he, the father, never had the opportunities his son seems to be wasting; whereupon Reinhold, who has grown up in a society where everyone has equal chances to do well and where class barriers are unknown, wonders why his father does not get his qualification as an engineer now: "Dabei kann er doch immer noch, versteh ich nicht, kann doch jeder jetzt, wenn er will" (29).

Thus we have the ingredients for a potential conflict between teenage-son and parents, but the irritations are (as yet) merely of a minor kind, and there are enough people to whom Reinhold can relate: Artur, the old former resistance fighter, Christa and Alexander⁶⁷ the young couple, and all his mates (male and female) at school.

IV

Youthful rebelliousness, sparked off by unfavourable pre-G.D.R. experience but viewed in the context of a steady development towards maturity, is the subject of Klaus Gerisch's novel Das Jahr und Katrin (1972) as well - another piece of evidence that 1972 was, indeed, the year of the young rebel in East German literature.

Das Jahr und Katrin describes a crucial year (the eighteenth) in the life of Michael Haller, pupil at the EOS, whose struggle to find and assert his own identity involves him in a period of inner and outer withdrawal from society, an honest reconsideration of his position and

ultimate social adjustment and integration. His main problem springs from his parentage: as the only son of two celebrated antifascist resistance fighters, he finds himself forever confronted with people's prefabricated image of him, comprising a whole range of features he is expected to display:

Herrgott, warum durfte ich nicht irgendwer sein wie jeder andere auch? Ich sagte meinen Namen, und schon war ich nicht mehr irgendwer. Ich sah es, sie hoben die Augenbrauen und erinnerten sich, es gehörte in die Zeit, meine Mutter und meinen Vater zu kennen ... und jetzt stand ich vor ihnen, und sie schnüffelten an mir herum. Und da gab es die anderen, die Mutter und Vater am nächsten standen, und in ihren Augen las ich immer nur den stummen Vorwurf: Du bist doch nicht irgendwer, du bist Michael Haller! (16)

Having to live up to these expectations and never quite meeting them becomes an unbearable strain, heightened by Michael's sense of personal isolation and loneliness: Never having known his parents (they died immediately after his birth), his longing to escape their threatening presence and to become an "irgendwer" in order to find his own identity, is coupled with a passionate search for them as individuals, as father and mother, rather than heroic images.

Thus Michael sets out to break down these preconceived notions and to build up an identity - any identity so long as it is his own. Letting his hair grow long, in a society where long hair on boys and men is generally regarded as a sign of effemination and (Western) degeneracy, promises to be a sure path to success (43). Teachers and fellow pupils are duly shocked, and Michael feels he is getting somewhere. On being driven into a corner by his class-mates (psychologically as well as

physically) he promptly has his hair shaven off, with the effect that he is sent down and precluded from sitting the Abitur, at least for that year, "wegen ungenügender gesellschaftlicher Reife" (66), in spite of his excellent academic performance ("Durchschnittsnote einskommazwei", 48). The collective grants him one year to mend his ways and reach the desired social maturity. The first part of the year Michael spends working at a petrol station, elated by the sense of having become "irgendwer" and of being judged by no more than the amount of petrol he dispenses each day.

Erst von da an war ich Michael Irgendwer, ohne besondere Kennzeichen, und selbst Richard juckte mein Stammbaum nicht, er sah mir ganz einfach auf die Finger und zählte die Liter, die durch meinen Sprithahn in irgendeinen Tank von irgendeinem Fahrer flossen ... Ich trottete als Nummer dreiundzwanzig des VEB Minol durch den Tag. Aber da hatte ich mein eigenes Gesicht, da war ich's selbst, und das war das einzige Maß (17).

He gets to know the girl Katrin, whose sympathy, common sense and love turn into a source of moral support during this slow and at times painful process of growing up in which an altruistic action on his part, physical illness and consequent recovery, mark important stages. Complete re-integration into the school community is achieved thanks to the understanding and positive attitude of the collective, i.e. his former class-mates and teachers. By the end of the year, Michael is ready to make a fresh start: an inhibited, isolated, depressed and insecure individual has turned into a free, sociable, balanced and happy member of society who has come to grips with his personal problems.

Das Jahr und Katrin is a story firmly rooted in the sixties, not merely because of its actual setting but also because of certain underlying moral assumptions. One of these is the unquestionable nature of parental, educational and ideological authority, an assumption which determines characters' attitudes as well as the perspective, tone and language of the book. Never is there the slightest suspicion that (socialist) parents and teachers might be wrong or misinformed or short-sighted. Parental authority is questioned merely with parents, such as Karin's, who have failed to *move* with the times: Karin's mother's bourgeois attitudes and values have remained unchanged throughout the years of political and social upheaval and reform; and her father, in spite of ample incentive to ask the right questions and provide himself with the right answers, has never outgrown his naive belief that it is some impersonal destiny rather than individual and collective free will that shapes people's lives. Thus for Katrin her parents' views have always been unacceptable, as they reject personal accountability and unprejudiced critical thinking:

So standen wir uns gegenüber, ich mit meinen
Vorwürfen, und sie ohne Antwort, ganz hilflos, und
ich dachte: Alles, was du einmal tun wirst, tust
du allein, kein irgendwer (101).

Katrin's problem (strongly reminiscent of Christa's in Zwischen zwei Nächten) is exactly Michael's in reverse: While Michael is desperately struggling to shed his superimposed pseudo-identity and turn into an "irgendwer", Katrin has, through painful experience, learnt to take her life into her own hands, to acquire a genuine identity. She is therefore precisely the person to understand and help him.

The ingredients of the socialist realist plot are easily identifiable in Gerisch's novel: the socialist perspective, the positive hero, the solving of (non-antagonistic) problems through collective action and integration into the working process, the optimistic view taken of the future, the unquestioning acceptance of authority. And yet we can detect a number of features which place the book firmly into the context of the seventies, above all the fact that the young rebel is seen in a sympathetic light and that there is no attempt to counterbalance his person by introducing a 'negative hero'.

V

While in Gerisch's (as in Walther's) novel legitimate socialist and unacceptable bourgeois claims to authority on the part of parents and teachers are still neatly separated so that the value system of socialist society remains unchallenged, parental and teacher authority even within the socialist framework come under close scrutiny in a novel that appeared four years later: Helmut Kruschel's Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt (1976)⁶⁸. Here narrow-minded, blind and even immoral behaviour on the part of those in authority is no longer blamed on outside forces but placed unmistakably at the doorstep of socialist society itself.

Eighteen-year-old Sabine in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt comes from a family background where egoism, materialism and cliché thinking plus, at best, blind love are all that parents can offer their children. Her father, a pillar of socialist society, is authoritarian, unable to

consider any views but his own, unconditionally bent on preserving law and order in his family as well as in society and resorting to merciless punishment if his commands fail to be obeyed. Her mother, a kind but weak and unthinking woman, accepts him and his materialist authoritarian value system without ever questioning it:

Ich verstehe Erich, er will immer unser Bestes. Und er arbeitet viel, wurde ausgezeichnet und befördert, hat immer den Kopf voll und machte in zwei Jahren aus dem Geschäft die modernste Kaufhalle des ganzen Kreises ... Natürlich habe ich mit achtunddreißig keine Rosinen mehr, aber ich kann zufrieden sein, Gerhard lernt Automechaniker, Moni ist auf der erweiterten Oberschule, wir haben ein schönes Haus und einen roten Wartburg, was will ich mehr (63, 65).

Sabine is appalled at her mother's lack of moral strength and independence and declares in her face: "Ich will nicht so werden, wie du geworden bist, Mutter" (65). She is determined never to do anything by half, never to accept compromises, but to enjoy or suffer to the full whatever life offers: Those around her, who themselves conform to the expectations of others because they hope to rise in the social hierarchy, regard her as "not normal", especially her father and one of her teachers. The author analyzes their perception of "normality", implicitly offsetting it against Sabine's (and his) own:

Was heißt eigentlich NORMAL? Es könnte heißen, sich nach Normen zu bewegen und immer das zu tun, was derjenige, der sich selber für normal hält, von einem erwartet. Es könnte auch heißen, nicht aufzufallen, es mit keinem Menschen zu verderben, sich lieber die Zunge zu beißen, als die Wahrheit zu sagen.

In diesem Sinne funktionierte sie (Sabine) nicht normal (21).

Sabine, who suffers profound disappointment with a teacher she had idolized, loses all academic ambition. She fails to be transferred to the tenth form, upon which her childhood friend comments: "Sie hätte viel mehr leisten können und ließ ganz bewußt nach. Ich glaube, sie legte es darauf an, nicht versetzt zu werden" (179-180). She hits rock-bottom when caught shop-lifting and is taken to a borstal. This is where her life takes a turn for the better: For she is fortunate to find, amongst the staff, people with idealism, love and a strong sense of moral and social dedication:

Und die Knuths und ihre Freunde würden sich wehren, nicht zum ersten Mal: Es darf keinem gleichgültig sein, wie die Jugendlichen entlassen werden, mit welcher Einstellung zum Leben, denn wir machen den Sozialismus nicht ohne sie, sondern auch für sie ... sie sollen klüger und selbstbewußter geworden sein, wenn sie entlassen werden, sie sind keine Menschen zweiter und dritter Klasse (50).

Sabine, who had previously experienced rejection and contempt, is beginning to feel wanted and valued as what she is and might become. For the first time in her life *she can* feel solid ground under her feet. On her release from the borstal she has built up sufficient inner strength to come to grips with the difficulties facing her in the outside world: the stigma attached to being a former inmate of a borstal, her boyfriend Jimmy's renewed (detrimental) influence on her, the temptation to interpret any set-back as a sign of inevitable defeat, of having to live as a second-class citizen. In the shoe factory she has been assigned to, the process of her social re-integration occurs in tandem with a growing awareness that the ideal (socialism) must not be judged by actual individual's success or failure to live up to its requirements.

Her attempt to break out of society is shown to be but a temporary as well as a salutary phase in the life of a thoughtful, sensitive and strong-willed individual exposed to an above-average degree of difficulties caused through shortcomings on the part of parents, teachers and society at large. Like Michael Haller (in Das Jahr und Katrin), Sabine draws strength and hope from focussing on the needs of others with handicaps greater than her own; amongst them - a rare phenomenon in East German fiction - a physically handicapped young man whom to accept and respect as a human being and member of society even she finds anything but easy:

Die kesse Sabine geniert sich. Es fällt ihr schwer, in das verzerrte Gesicht des jungen Mannes zu sehen, wie er sich anstrengt, wie er würgt an den Worten, wie er die unbeherrschten, fliegenden Hände zu Hilfe nimmt.

Sie denkt ... vielleicht hätte ich auch so sprechen können wie diese Touristen, so gleichgültig so gedankenlos (345).

Thus Sabine's Odyssey ends safely in the harbour of the socialist collective. Its claim to novelty lies in that its net of experience has been cast wider than in previous East German works of fiction about the young, including a discussion of problems relating to youth criminality and rehabilitation as well as at least a reference in passing to difficulties of integration encountered by the young disabled.

VI

Five years after the appearance of Edgar Wibeau on the East German scene nineteen-year-old Petra in Helfried Schreiter's novel Ich fange mit dem Anfang an (1977) can be seen embarking on an enterprise not unlike Edgar Wibeau's. Having, for some years, lived only with her (divorced) mother and in a style which had largely been dictated by family and social conventions, Petra decides to leave home and take her life into her own hands:

Das können Sie sich nicht vorstellen, daß jemand plötzlich keine Lust mehr hat, sich alle Entscheidungen wegnehmen zu lassen, wie? Vielleicht war das bei Ihnen noch nicht so. Bei mir fing das im Kindergarten an, dann in der Schule, zu Hause, überall hat man mir meine Entscheidung weggenommen. Ich bin entschieden worden, verstehen Sie. Nichts habe ich mir erkämpfen müssen! Keinen Widerstand brauchte ich zu überwinden. Und deshalb weiß ich nicht, ob das haltbar ist, was wir so Weltanschauung nennen. Vielleicht habe ich sie gar nicht angenommen, ich meine nicht wirklich, vielleicht bilde ich mir das nur ein. Ich hatte ja nie Gelegenheit, es zu überprüfen (69).

With Edgar, she shares a relaxed, fair-minded attitude to her elders, condemning neither her embittered and somewhat weepy mother whose company she is beginning to find unbearably oppressive, nor her run-away father who has found with another woman the love he had failed to find in his marriage to Petra's mother. Indeed, she admires her father for following the voice of his heart rather than the requirements of social convention (120-121). As for herself, all she asks for is to be left alone in order to structure her life according to her own (emotional) needs. This she does by declining the offer of a university place (after

performing brilliantly at the E05, 69, 71) and taking on a job as an unskilled worker in a toy factory some distance from her home town.

But in contrast to Edgar Wibeau's unambiguous mental state, Petra's longing for freedom of life and action seems to be counteracted by her craving for love and security. She freely confesses to her inability to be alone for more than a brief period of time (144), her wide range of boyfriends, often several at a time, her inability to make up her mind which of them she likes best and her delight in kissing which fills her with a feeling resembling that of coming home on a cold day into a warm room:

Ich hab furchtbar gern geküßt, ehrlich, ich küsse heute noch gern, dabei finde ich das Küssen nicht ausgesprochen sexuell. Es ist mehr. Es ist wie wenn man nach Hause kommt: Eben hat man noch auf der Straße gestanden und gefroren, und man kommt rein in das Zimmer, und es ist wunderschön warm, und die Kälte ist weg, und man fühlt sich einfach wohl (144).

It is apparent that her parents' separation has affected her deeply and left her insecure and vulnerable. For her own self-protection she devises a theory that love and marriage are irreconcilable, and since she is determined not to miss out on marriage and children, she decides to do without love. Thus, when she does fall in love (with Klaus), she immediately attempts to frighten him off; however, she finds losing him rather more difficult to cope with than she had anticipated.

Her leaving home is therefore not purely a response to a desire to be free and independent. It is also a running away from Klaus and her

love of him. This issue increasingly dominates the story. There is less and less evidence of Petra restructuring her life and widening her horizon, but more and more of an obsession with sexual experiences (including a Lesbian one, a novelty in East German literature, 90). Petra gets close to marrying a man who adores her although she leaves him in no doubt about her own criteria for a stable marriage, while he lives in the hope that love might still grow once they get married. Petra's emancipatory drive is drowned by the delight of finding herself an object of male adoration:

Von den gleichaltrigen Jungen kommt doch kaum einer auf die Idee, einem die Tür aufzuhalten, den Stuhl zurechtzurücken oder Blumen zu schenken. Jürgen hatte das alles drauf, und ich kann nicht sagen, daß ich es nicht genossen hätte. Vielleicht bin ich in dem Punkt furchtbar altmodisch, doch ich genieße es, von einem Mann ein bißchen verwöhnt zu werden, und wenn das mit zunehmender Gleichberechtigung aufhören sollte, dann pfeife ich auf die ganze Gleichberechtigung. Ich brauche das (113).

Is this really the voice of a young 'rebel' out to challenge the world and to base her life on her own decisions? Or is it the voice of inverted rebellion, that is rebellion against a society where equality of the sexes has been driven to its utter limits and where emancipation is the oldest of hats?

When Petra becomes pregnant her conditions for a happy life seem to have all been met. Yet, suddenly everything changes when news reaches her that Klaus has been imprisoned for "obstructing a police officer in the performance of his duty": She starts a row with her near-husband, has a miscarriage and abruptly departs to find her old lover.

Thus, the similarities between Edgar and Petra notwithstanding, there is a fundamental difference between them: Where Edgar is proud, defiant, ironical, detached and independent at all levels, Petra is self-indulgent, occasionally sentimental and never really mistress of her own life. Her desire to be independent remains subordinate to her craving for love and security; the effect on the reader is a mixture of sympathy and irritation rather than of pleasure and liberation. What begins as a story of emancipation ends with the impending reunion of two lovers. Larger issues, such as the relationship between the individual and society or the chances of the independent-minded young person to achieve integration into a well-ordered affluent society are touched upon briefly but never tackled in detail, as the focus shifts towards Petra's purely private problem of how to find a suitable husband. Nor is any attention given to the question how her love for a rather helpless and passive social outsider can ever develop into more than motherly protectiveness.

VII

In 1979, Dorothea Kleine published her novel eintreffe heute, hailed in the West as "eines der interessantesten Bücher aus der DDR in der letzten Zeit"⁶⁹, while being denied a proper review by a literary critic in the East for being "indiskutabel", "obgleich ... wahrhaft kritikwürdig"⁷⁰. Thematically, it is strongly reminiscent of Gerisch's Das Jahr und Katrin: the problems encountered by the young protagonist, nineteen-year-old Agnes Benedikt, spring primarily from the fact that she cannot free herself from the constraints imposed upon her by her

grandmother's notoriety as a fascist resistance fighter. For her this means that she has never tried to think things out for herself, to question any of the values adopted from her elders, while considering herself superior to most others on account of her proletarian descent. Agnes experiences the shock of her life when, after having constructed her entire view of the world around this assumption, she discovers that her real grandmother is in fact someone quite different, a woman as (petit) bourgeois as can be. Her naive 'Weltbild', uncritically founded on Party doctrine, is further shaken when her lover, a young member of staff at the "Parteischule" she has been delegated to attend, turns out to be a coward, terrified to put a foot wrong with his superiors, and to top it all, the school directorate is demonstrably keeping the truth about certain important matters concealed from the students.

Like Michael in Das Jahr und Katrin Agnes feels provoked into challenging everyone and everything. She ends up by being sent down from the "Parteischule" and promptly takes on a job as an unskilled worker in a textile factory. Here at last she finds direct contact with the working classes she used merely to theorize about and *on belonging to which* she had erroneously prided herself. It is here that she begins to discover her own personality and role in society. She leaves no avenue untried, exposes herself to a wide variety of experiences, including joining a gang of motorbike-riding, leather-jacketed, jeans-wearing idle youths and becoming their rocker-queen. Her clear-headedness and the frankness with which she admits to having been wrong previously are remarkable, as for instance when she acknowledges: "... sie gehörten zu

der Kategorie Jugendlicher, von denen wir in der FDJ-Kreisleitung sagten, daß wir nicht an sie rankämen" (149). Now that she lives amongst these youngsters - with a boy-friend chosen from their ranks - she finds that a great deal of their seemingly offensive behaviour is due to innate lack of curiosity and, more importantly, society's failure to stimulate any such curiosity or positive interest in them (149). On the contrary, they are driven into isolation and defensiveness; After 10 o'clock at night the town is deserted, the slightest noise echoes in the empty streets and irritates those who, after a long day's work, wish to go to sleep. The gang are shouted at by angry citizens, have dirty water emptied over them, find themselves despised and regarded with suspicion when, in fact, they are merely bored and have no intention of harming anyone.

Having gone through this experience of living amongst society's outcasts, *Agnes* emerges with a deeper understanding of their, her own and other people's needs. Her independent and spontaneous character gains her respect and trust amongst colleagues and superiors. Thus she ultimately proves herself the true (spiritual rather than physical) heir to the traditional working class principles: never to deceive either herself or others, but to be frank in all things, never to shun problems but to face them, never to take anything for granted but to question it first. *Agnes* is now ready to re-enter life and society as a mature and responsible socialist personality.

What clearly marks this novel as a product of the seventies, notwithstanding its traditional plot and characterization patterns, is the

seriousness of the attempt to understand rather than condemn youngsters who fail to fit into the prescribed framework and to portray them as integral parts and products of socialist society itself rather than as the easy target for outside forces. Admittedly, there is no real analysis of causes or consequences, but every attempt is made to avoid mere moralizing. All blame for any undesirable or even offensive behaviour and reactions on the part of young people must, the author is saying through her protagonist, be placed firmly on the doorstep of the society in which these young people are growing up.

VIII

We have identified six works published in the seventies about young rebels who opt out of their habitual (and outwardly successful) schooling career and expose themselves to an unsheltered life amongst the working classes. This experience sets in motion a process of maturation and adjustment. The individuals ultimately accept their place in society but with a new sense of their own identity as well as their role in the collective. This, in turn, helps them to recognize, understand and want to solve the difficulties experienced by other young people which they had previously been blind to.

The novelty of these portrayals of young people lies not so much in the pattern of their development as such, but rather in a shift of emphasis, away from 'socialist' and towards 'critical' realism; this, in the context of characterization, manifests itself mainly in a widening out

of the range of experience the young protagonists undergo: it includes sympathetic contact with handicapped people, with social outsiders (youth gangs) and even involvement in lesbianism and youth criminality. These concessions to 'critical realism' may not appear very great; but in the context of East German literature they represent a significant breaking down of up to then closely guarded taboos.

IX

The second variant of the 'positive rebel' is the youngster whose growing-up takes place not through exposure to the world of work but, on the contrary, through an escape into a non-working situation, yet also involving physical as well as mental detachment from his usual environment. This makes for an even closer affinity with Edgar Wibeau, the pioneer amongst young East German run-aways and self-styled loafers.

The works under discussion here are: Rolf Schneider, Die Reise nach Jaroslaw (1974) and Joachim Walther, Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi (1975).

Whether one wishes to go as far as Fritz J. Raddatz⁷¹ who, in a scathing attack, dismisses Schneider's novel as "literarischer Modeschmuck", "der dünne Aufguß eines Plagiatorentees", a cheap imitation, that is, of Plenzdorf's "brisante Etüde über einen sozialistischen drop-out"; or whether one prefers to adopt a more kindly stance and subscribe to Martin Kane's view of it as "a tale of some charm"⁷² - there is no doubting the fact that Rolf Schneider, who has always proved himself well familiar with new trends and openings for literary success, learnt a great deal from Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. and put into practice his newly acquired insights with remarkable alacrity^{72a}.

Die Reise nach Jaroslaw appeared a mere two years after Plenzdorf's book, when the debates about the latter had not even had time to die down. It is the story of eighteen-year-old Gitti, told by herself, of how and why, in the summer of 1972, she ran away from home, spent four weeks travelling and hitch-hiking through North Germany and Poland in the company of a young Pole by the name of Jan, and then returned to East Berlin where, at the time of telling her story, she is about to begin training in an Inter Hotel.

Gitti gives various reasons for leaving home: the death of her beloved grandmother who had occupied an important place in her life; the parents' move from a cosy older-type flat into a nondescript, impersonal, modern one where the girl finds it hard to settle down; the sudden loss of a boy-friend; the shock of not being delegated (after the 9th form in the OS) to the EOS (with the prospect of a university place to follow) in spite of her outstanding academic performance. To her great chagrin her parents, both of them educated professional people, do not support her protest against what appears to her an instance of blatant injustice; she has a feeling of being betrayed by them when none of her arguments seem to carry much weight with them:

Ich ging in mein Zimmer. Ich holte alle Schwarten von Stabü, Verfassung und so. Ich zeigte dem Greis den Artikel über Gleichberechtigung. Ich zeigte dem Greis den Artikel mit Recht auf Bildung. Ich sagte dem Greis, wenn früher mit Bildungsplanung Mist gemacht worden ist, wäre das nicht meine Schuld, und ich sähe nicht ein, warum ich darunter leiden sollte (30).

A boy, with poorer academic results than her own but with the advantage of being male and of working class parentage takes her place in the EOS.

Her father's efforts to calm her down by reminding her "die Anordnungen wären eben so" (30) understandably do little to allay her bitter disappointment⁷³.

Gitti's dissatisfaction with her parents - her father a biologist and collector of coins and model locomotives (8), her mother an engineer (9) - goes deeper still. She feels cheated out of love and affection, particularly from her mother, whose one-time effort to stay at home for her child to tide her over her grief at her grandmother's death failed miserably:

Wir liefen ziemlich überflüssig in der neuen Wohnung umeinander herum. Die Greisin interessierte sich für alles, was ich tat ... Nach einer Weile fing die Greisin an, gereizt zu werden. Sie schielte immer öfter am Tag nach ihren Tabellen, Rechenstäben und Schnellheftern. Zwischendurch brachte sie es fertig, daß sie dummes Zeug über Oma Hela von sich gab ... Nach sechs Wochen brach die Greisin ihren unbezahlten Urlaub ab und war froh, daß sie wieder von Herzen Kältetechnik machen durfte (22).

Gitti is impatient with her parents' naive delight in material status symbols: They buy a car and christen it Wölke (an abbreviation for "Wasser, Öl, Luft, Kraftstoff, Elektroladung", 31), which Gitti finds "idiotic" (31); they acquire a minute cottage amongst identical minute cottages, where they spend their weekends amongst cars, people, howling children and dogs, inhaling an air heavy with the smell of pine-trees, beer and potato salad (33). They then save up for yet another car to do away with their recurring arguments over which of them will have to walk to work. Gitti is appalled; she is prone to car-sickness anyway and besides prefers walking (31). A young Bolivian,

Carlos, initiates her to a life that is free from adult interference and materialist wishes, but then deeply disappoints her by disappearing from the idyllicly non-conformist East Berlin scene in order to take over his father's ranch - a traitor to the ideals he had taught her to embrace.

When Gitti finds that her extra efforts at school have gone unrewarded, she packs her case and leaves home. She spends two nights and two days drifting around Berlin (the account being reminiscent of Holden Caulfield's wanderings through New York), still uncertain what to do with herself. Only on the third day - her eighteenth birthday, as it happens - does her mind begin to focus on what, in the course of the book, then acquires the character of a leitmotif: "Jarosław": "Aus irgendeinem Grunde dachte ich an Jarosław" (69), a name which, of course, she associates with her grandmother Oma Hela (11), the only person she has ever really felt loved by. With Jarosław on her mind, her movements become more purposeful. Standing outside their old house, she thinks of Oma Hela and Jarosław (73), and a few hours later she has made up her mind: "Ich hatte beschlossen nach Jarosław zu fahren" (74). This decision receives final confirmation when an old woman in Skubice who reminds her of her grandmother seems to be winking at her (80).

At this point, a new factor is introduced into the story: Gitti decides that she must have company and that the companion must be the young man she briefly saw on crossing the Polish border from Frankfurt to Skubice. Against his will, young Jan is incorporated into her plans " ... kommen Sie mit nach Jarosław" (89). (Later in the book we are assured through

the mouth of the Saint Brigitte that Jan too was running away from something (256), but there is no evidence in his behaviour at the time). Gitti's determination to take Jan with her to Jarosław is so unshakable that she even accepts a compromise: to accompany him first to the Baltic coast so that he can study the Gothic churches there which are the subject of his dissertation. Cleverly though she manages to sidetrack him systematically until they do enter Poland.

Gitti's trip exposes her to a number of fundamental and formative experiences: encounters with victims of Nazi brutality and their differing attitudes to Germans today (149, 161); with workers and their lives (189ff.); and with a member of the older generation, Kasimierz Gerhart (205-214), a counterpart to Edgar's Zaremba, who, after a life of sacrifice and struggle in support of Communism, has chosen to retreat into a country cottage as a wood carver. The two young people never get to Jarosław - Gitti finds that the magic attraction of Jarosław rapidly dwindles when she has found in Kasimierz a person fulfilling all the functions Oma Hela used to fulfil for her and even potentially including Jan's. Consequently, when Jan with growing impatience, partly motivated by jealousy, urges her to leave Kasimierz and move on to Jarosław, she can hardly remember what he is talking about: "Was mich betrifft, so hatte ich Jarosław fast vollständig vergessen, sachlich" (226), and a little later: "Ich bin nicht in Form. Du mußt Nachsicht mit mir haben. Kannst du mir beibringen, was Jarosław ist?" (233). Jan has no more illusions about his future usefulness in the context of Gitti's plans and leaves her. Although she does track him down again in his home town they both know that

their relationship cannot be patched up: her cold, their ceaseless quarrelling and finally her 'vision' of her patron saint lead up to their separation, with no intention on either side to meet again:

Mir fiel ein, daß Jan überhaupt nicht wußte, wo ich wohne. Ich hatte es ihm nie gesagt, und er hatte mich nie gefragt. Wir stehen nicht im Telefonbuch (264).

Jan and Jarosław both have become redundant. Gitti, through the influence of physical weakness (her protracted cold) and supernatural persuasion has returned to the path of duty. She has learnt her lesson; knows that it is time for her to "grow up" (254). As her patron saint has it: "Als spontaner Akt kann Durchbrennen ganz hübsch sein, als Lebenshaltung ist es ein bißchen mager" (255). What is her future going to bring her? Will it be richer for the time she spent pursuing her dream? The Saint's advice to look around for an alternative merely elicits from her the answer that she cannot see one (256). Her final acceptance of the job her parents have found her "in dem stinkfeinen Interhotel" (265) does not seem to us to be evidence of any newly acquired moral and social responsibility, but rather more of weariness and a lack of positive ideas on her part. The powerful (however vaguely defined) dream that made her set out to Jarosław now merely hovers as a distant memory, its sole recognizable impact on reality being her decision to learn Polish rather than some other foreign language:

Ich werde auf jeden Fall Polnisch lernen. Ich hatte eine Großmutter, die kam aus Jarosław. Jarosław ist eine kleine Stadt in Ostgalizien, auf der Strecke zwischen Krakau und Przemyśl (266).

Thus, disappointingly for the reader, Gitti's change of heart is neither the result of a mature and responsible decision nor an inevitable concession to external pressure. All it seems to be is a limp compromise, a half-hearted attempt on the part of the author to please everyone: those who like the Edgar Wibeau type rebel, as well as those who insist on the right balance between individual and collective interests being restored, on limits being drawn between youthful lightheartedness and downright rebellion. The reader is left with a sense of having been let down, of questions having been raised which are consequently dodged. Or, as one of the more scathing critics of Schneider's novel has it:

Schneider's novel fits a well-known, typical bourgeois literary category: literature as a flight from reality. Only here he combines the flight at the same time with instructions how one might deal most expediently with an undesirable reality. It is, therefore, a trivial form of flight. Moreover, it is important to note that it is not only a flight into the world of the beautiful imagination but a flight into the world of clichés⁷⁴.

Great similarities with Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. notwithstanding, the contrast between the two works is immediately apparent: In the former, the motivation of Edgar's action and the tension arising therefrom are upheld throughout the book; the questions posed implicitly are left for the reader to answer; Edgar's flight from home and determination not to be aligned must be taken seriously. In the latter work, Gitti's escape remains but a flash in the pan, an escapade of no more than private consequence, "a damp squib"⁷⁵. Ironically, Schneider himself in his novel highlights the links between the two works as well as the difference between them. Gitti and her literary counterpart and model meet in Friedrichstraße Station and, after a brief chat, Edgar invites her to live with him in his garden

shed. Gitti, unhesitatingly, rejects this offer, as she (quite rightly) senses that his attitude is a much more radical one than hers and that they really have little in common (although even here she imitates his form of expression):

Ich habe nichts gegen Beat, aber der Typ redete von Beat, als redete er von Sex. Ich habe auch nichts gegen Sex. Ich habe was dagegen, aus Beat oder meinetwegen Sex eine Religion zu machen. Ich versuchte das dem Jungen klarzumachen. Er reagierte völlig irre. Er war total besessen von Beat. Leute, die auf diese Art besessen sind, kriegen entweder den Nobelpreis, oder sie begehen Selbstmord (49).

X

Although Edgar's counterparts are certainly more numerous amongst literary figures of the female sex, there is at least one male specimen: nineteen-year-old Norman Bilat in Joachim Walther's Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi (1975). In this first-person narrative (which, like Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. and Die Legende vom Glück ohne Ende began as a film script⁷⁶) we are told about three weeks in the life of a member of a youth brigade, a young engine-fitter, who breaks away from his working routine and threateningly cul-de-sac personal relationships in order to hitch-hike to Romania: supposedly to help the Romanians cope with a flooding of the Danube, but in fact simply seizing on the first opportunity of a temporary escape from his orderly, pre-programmed life. Adventure, activity, risk, excitement, new sights and new people are what he is longing to encounter:

Ich möchte trampen ... Irgendwohin, ganz egal. Keinen Tag am gleichen Ort! Jeden Tag was Neues sehen. Am Morgen nicht wissen, wo man am Abend schläft. Immer in Bewegung. Selbst bestimmen, wo und wie lange man bleibt, was und wann man ißt, sein eigener Herr sein! Am Abend wissen, warum man müde ist. Eindrücke sammeln und einwecken! Sich nicht hängenlassen, sondern was tun! (8).

These feelings are closely coupled with a desire to get away from parental, party and state authority and control, to test for himself the moral and ideological principles he has been taught and has accepted uncritically, to make his own choice rather than to do as he is told. On leaving the EOS with not only the school leaving certificate but also the certificate of proficiency as a fitter - like all the other young rebels we have come across, Norman Bilat is very gifted - he had rejected the university place he had been offered and gone away from his home town to start work as a fitter in Berlin, purely out of opposition to his father:

Er hat mich nie zu etwas gezwungen, ich meine - so offensichtlichen Zwang - er hat mich beredet, sanft geführt und mich ein bißchen mit meiner Abhängigkeit von ihm erpreßt, bis ich weich war. Ich wollte in der zehnten Klasse abgehen und arbeiten, er hat mich dazu gebracht, die Schule fertig zu machen und dazu noch den Facharbeiterbrief und das Abitur. Anschließend hatte er für mich eingeplant, daß ich studiere. Aber da bin ich von zu Hause weg und hab in Berlin als Maschinenschlosser angefangen. Bloß aus Opposition (51).

Norman describes his father as authoritarian, "herrlich normal" (52), orderly, humourless, relentlessly bent on justice and compromise, mainly concerned with his health and old-age pension, a "Verwaltungsmensch" and

"vorbildlicher Zeitgenosse" convinced of his own qualities as citizen and father (50-51). Doubtless, his son's decision to take a break is as much an act of defiance of his father's principles as had been his rejection of an academic career; his insistence on hitch-hiking as a mode of transport betrays his longing to do something slightly outside the confines of legality. We are strongly reminded of Edgar Wibeau when Norman is provoked by two young East Germans he meets in Prague into admitting to his real motives rather than hiding behind the pretext that he is merely obeying the call of his (Socialist) conscience:

Komm, sei doch mal ehrlich: Du wolltest raus, mal was anderes und so. Gib's doch zu. Mann!

Na schön, sagte ich, auch das. Mit dem Kindergarten geht's doch mal los, dann die Schule, dann die Lehre und kein Ende. Hör auf die Erwachsenen! Warte, bis du gefragt bist! ... Dabei ... ist alles freundlich gemeint: Wir wollen doch nur dein Bestes, die Art. Da werden dir die Wege mit Hinweisschildern gepflastert; Steine aus dem Weg gehoben, und du machst eigentlich bloß nach, was andere geplant haben. Du denkst, du lebst - dabei erfüllst du ihren Plan ... (28).

Here we have another young voice expressing dissatisfaction at being discouraged from taking personal initiative, from discovering and developing his identity, from basing his life on personal choice rather than on choices made by others.

However, having provided for himself the opportunity to indulge in adventure, freedom and personal development, Norman soon discovers that the answer to his problems cannot simply lie in his moving from one extreme to another: He meets the ravishingly beautiful Dutch girl

Shireen with Buddhist inclinations, who follows him to Romania and, in the absence of any works of heroic altruism to be done by him, lures him on to an isolated rock on the sea where she attempts to teach him self-fulfilment in meditation, the abnegation of all social instincts and needs. Much as he likes her company, Norman soon realizes the undesirability, at least for himself, of a life of inactivity and social isolation. Edgar's statement regarding the indispensable function of "Kumpels" and "Arbeit" in a happy and fulfilled life⁷⁷ rings in our ears on hearing Norman declare with irritation:

Scheiße! sagte ich leise und laut: Verdammt noch mal, ich halt das nicht mehr aus, dieses Rumsitzen, ich bin nun mal kein Yogi, ich muß was tun, muß Leute sehen, mit Leuten reden (126).

Norman's wholehearted rejection of individualist ethics is reinforced by his declaration of unconditional loyalty to his own country, notwithstanding the undeniable attractions of others and the equally undeniable imperfections of his own:

Aber ich lauf nicht weg, bloß weil nicht alles so ist, wie ich es gern hätte. Ich hab' ne ziemliche Menge dagegen, bin aber auch wieder dafür. Eigentlich, das merke ich jetzt, hier, möchte ich nirgendwo anders leben ... Ich widersprech mir nicht, wenn du das denkst: Natürlich bin ich unzufrieden, aber bei mir zu Hause sind die Unzufriedenen keine verfolgten Gegner. Verändern ist kein Schreckenswort, bei dem man die Wasserwerfer auffährt, das steht tagtäglich in den Zeitungen, obwohl die einen auch nicht gerade vom Hocker reißen (141).

Norman Bilat's three-week escapade is clearly shown to have been a salutary experience for him and his slightly dicey manoeuvres to achieve

it perfectly forgivable in retrospect. He had seized and made best possible use of the chance to test for himself what before he had merely absorbed uncritically, thus reaching a new level of awareness: the first step towards becoming a mature and responsible citizen, of a society he has freely chosen. If there are any doubts in the reader's mind that Walther's story is intended by the author as a contribution to the Plenzdorf tradition and yet as distinct from it, these should be dispelled when he discovers that the narrator/protagonist even anticipates and answers potential Edgar-style criticism of his story⁷⁸. On the train bringing him closer and closer to home, Norman takes great trouble to avoid a misunderstanding of his position:

Nur damit das klar ist und keiner sich etwas zurecht-machen kann: Ich hatte nicht die Absicht, zu Hause um Vergebung zu bitten oder Reue zu heucheln. Ich war nicht der Gestrauchelte, der weinend wieder heim-fand, ich war nicht der bekehrte Ausreißer, der sich streicheln lassen wollte. Ich war kein Verlierer, der heimlich und verschämt zurückschleichen mußte, aber ich war auch kein Gewinner, der strahlend durch Türrahmen wie durch Siegesbögen dröhnen durfte. Entweder war ich beides oder nichts davon ...

Es hat da mal einen gegeben, Bilat hieß er oder so ähnlich, der war sich selbst nicht grün, hatte nichts als Flausen im Schädel, muckte auf, schlug alle gut gemeinten Ratschläge in den Wind, zog ganz alleine los, seiner fixen Idee nach - und dann hat er sich dabei die Hörner abgestoßen und ist nun lammfriedlich, streichel-weich und frißt aus der Hand: Also so nicht, nicht mit mir! Ich hab gelernt. Das ja. Aber mir ist keine Lehre erteilt worden (143).

XI

What was said about the first variant of the 'positive rebel' who learnt social integration through exposure to the world of work, is also applicable to the second variant, characterized by the temporary withdrawal from this world: as all these rebels ultimately return to take up their places in society, their problems can be described as 'non-antagonistic' in kind and therefore perfectly in compliance with the principles of socialist cultural policies. What sets these books apart from those published in the sixties, is that they dwell, not on this eventual outcome, but on the individuals' problems preceding it; there is a freer, less orthodox handling of such problems, with moral evaluation by the narrator/author intruding if at all less heavily than previously. The young protagonists have a new richness and fullness of character, they come to life and engage our interest in a way young literary figures in East German works of earlier decades rarely do.

2.4 Recurrent characteristics and motifs

The literary figure of the young rebel displays a whole set of properties common to most or even all of his species, thus re-ⁱnforcing the view that we are, indeed, dealing with a stock figure of this first decade of the Honecker era.

2.4.1 The gifted youngster

I

The typical rebellious youngster in East German literature of the seventies can boast of above-average gifts, intellectual as well as artistic. Top results in educational and working careers are the norm. If he fails, he fails not through lacking ability but through moral immaturity and a weakness of character that springs from a lack of security and of sense of purpose. Whether 'positive' or 'negative', the young rebel can boast of ability, inquisitiveness, perceptiveness and independence of spirit: as his point of view dominates the narrative perspective, this has a direct bearing on the way the story is told.

Following these young protagonists in their development, we move through the entire spectrum of East German educational provision, with an obvious focus on the higher echelons.

At Oberschule level we have young Reinhold, the thoughtful and perceptive fifteen-year-old in Zwischen zwei Nächten who asks such questions as "was ist nun eigentlich mit dem Tod?" (194) and who is keen to do better at school in order to keep up with his gifted girlfriend. Sabine in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt is described as a girl who is anything but "dumm" (17, 29) and whose failure to complete her ten years of education at the OS (17) is explained by her finely developed sense of right and wrong. As she ranks moral behaviour more highly than academic achievement she deliberately spoils her chances of success at school (104). Gitti in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw does not hesitate to describe her own performance as "eindeutig Spitze" (31) which should have secured her a smooth transition to the EOS. She is looking forward to hard work there (42) when a boy, "eindeutig schlechter als ich" (29), is given preference, which triggers off her decision to leave home.

Next, there are those young protagonists who have made the transition from OS to EOS and who can boast of successful performance at this elitist level of secondary education: Michael, in Das Jahr und Katrin, achieves a 1.1 average mark without even trying; his girlfriend Katrin is at the same school and contributes considerably to his moral education. Jimmy in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt lacks not ability but moral and social commitment: if he leaves the EOS prematurely this is not due to academic failure but to certain "philosophical" problems (45-6) arising from his family background. Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi has successfully completed EOS schooling (Abitur plus Facharbeiterbrief, 51) and would normally have gone on to

higher education, had it not been for his wish to spite his father.

Petra in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an describes her smooth progression through school in such terms as "in der zweiten Klasse lauter Einsen" (69), "danach Jahr für Jahr ohne Schwierigkeit versetzt", "nach Ablauf der zehnten Klasse in die erweiterte Oberschule" (70); this is followed by an offer of a university place which, however, she declines (70), in spite of a remarkable Abitur average of 1.6 (70-71): She cannot make up her mind about what she wants to do, also feels the need to get away from Berlin and her boyfriend. Agnes Benedikt (in eintreffe heute) can boast of an impeccable academic and ideological record which (retrospectively) she depicts with mild irony:

Ohne Zweifel, ich war ein aufgewecktes Mädchen, trank die Milch der frommen Denkungsart und hatte in Politischer Ökonomie eine bewunderungswürdige Eins. Wenn mich die Genossen von Handel und Versorgung in die Läden geschickt hätten, um die Würzkraft von weißem Pfeffer zu verlängern, weil das den Weltfrieden stabiler machte, ich hätte es getan. Ich schwärmte für Weltfrieden, wie meine Schwester Nora für Bach schwärmte (14).

An "admirable" Young Pioneer (15) and, later, a strong-minded member of the Free German Youth, well-versed in Marxism-Leninism (15) she has no problems in passing her Abitur at the EOS. And as her record is unblemished by Western connections or Party penalties, delegation to a special course mounted by the "Parteischule" follows as the next step on the road to the top (18). Problems arising there once again have moral rather than intellectual roots. Edgar Wibeau's achievements (in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.) are described in the context not of an EOS but of his apprenticeship: with an average mark of 1.1 he is the best apprentice in his place of employment. His posthumous account

and assessment of his life leave us in no doubt as to the superiority of his intellectual abilities.

University is the setting for the story of Yana and Tolja in Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit, with Yana having previously enjoyed the privilege of attending an ABF and having rejected the offer of a year at Leningrad University. Both young people are students of chemistry, both have excellent chances of doing well, and with both of them the element of risk lies in their lack of social responsibility. Paul in Legende vom Glück ohne Ende is a university graduate and moves from success to success until his infatuation with Paula and her values puts a stop to his career. Christa and Alexander in Zwischen zwei Nächten are outstanding academics and professionals. Especially Alexander has excelled throughout his academic career (four years at boarding school and five years at university) and his problem is that he has too many rather than too few ideas. It is his exaggerated desire to make his mark on society that causes him to lose sight of his social and moral commitments.

II

Not only do young rebels excel in school, they also display a certain - highly selective - awareness of literary tradition, implicitly subscribing to Edgar Wibeau's view: "Meine Meinung zu Büchern war: Alle Bücher kann kein Mensch lesen, nicht einmal alle sehr guten. Folglich konzentriere ich mich auf zwei"(32). Books to them are not primarily a source of information, knowledge or even entertainment; they offer

"Lebenshilfe", chances to identify and to emulate, re-assurance that there are others with similar emotions, views, problems, all members of the "imaginäre Gemeinschaft der Jungen"⁷⁹. Books provide moral support in the face of adult pressure to conform and do well. There is Edgar Wibeau's favourite, J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye, and its protagonist Holden Caulfield. Edgar warmly recommends it to his listeners/readers:

Ich kann euch nur raten, ihn zu lesen, wenn ihr ihn irgendwo aufreißen könnt. Reißt euch das Ding unter den Nagel, wenn ihr es bei irgendwem stehen seht, und gebt es nicht wieder her! Leiht es euch aus und gebt es nicht wieder zurück. Ihr sagt einfach, ihr habt es verloren. Das kostet fünf Mark, na und? (38-9)

His advice has obviously been taken by Petra in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an. Her unidentified reference to Holden's worries regarding the ducks' fate in winter implies that she can assume familiarity with the book among her own readers:

... während Klaus erzählte, fielen mir diese Enten vom Central-Park ein, ich meine die ungeheuer wichtige Frage, was diese Enten im Winter machen. Ehrlich, ich mußte die ganze Zeit über an diese Enten denken. Und noch heute fallen mir die Enten ein, die im Winter nicht wissen, wohin, wenn ich an Klaus denke. Und es kann manchmal verdammt lange Winter sein (38).

While Petra associates Klaus with the ducks, as both are helplessly exposed to the harshness of the outside world, Klaus sees himself as "Guten-Morgen-Sager" (reminiscent of Heinrich Böll's "berufsmäßiger Trauernder" in his short story "Es wird etwas geschehen"), cheering people up either over the telephone or by going from door to door and offering just to listen to them; or even by stationing himself on the

steps of the S-Bahn station and smilingly offering his greeting to early-morning commuters: an underdog who turns his weakness into a strength and makes others feel wanted and loved (56).

Gitti in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw finds her literary model in Ernest Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls. She discovers the book on her parents' shelf:

Ich wette, die Greise haben das Buch nie in den Fingern gehabt, obwohl es unheimlich zerlesen war. Das Buch war einfach nichts für die Greise, sachlich (31).

She adds it to her escape luggage on leaving home, spends the early hours of her eighteenth birthday re-reading her favourite chapters on a park bench and then drops it ceremoniously into a waste-paper basket: a personal sacrifice on the occasion of her initiation into the world of adults, an indication that reality is overtaking her dreams?

In der Bibel, hatte mir Oma Hela erzählt, gibt es einen Mann, der Abraham heißt und das Beste, was er hat, nämlich seinen Sohn, einfach opfern will ... Ein zerlesenes Buch von Hemingway ist kein lebendiger Mensch. Ich übertreibe kein bißchen, wenn ich sage, daß mir in diesen Minuten sterbenselend zumute war (68).

Although the book itself has now become physically inaccessible, the process of identification lingers on: her haircut (another initiation rite) brings back an echo of her reading experience: "Vielleicht hatte Robert Jordans Kaninchen so ausgesehen" (71). During her first night with Jan in the sleeping-bag she is reminded of a similar event in the life of Hemingway's heroine and her lover, and spends a long time that

night involving Jan in a discussion of Hemingway's book. Once again, familiarity with the book on the part of the young is assumed as a matter of course: "Er kannte das Buch ziemlich gut ..." (126).

Gitti's Hemingway cult receives a final boost when Kasimierz Gerhart turns out to have met the author and his model for Maria, the "Kaninchen", in Spain during his time as a resistance fighter: "In mir rührte sich eine Menge, als ich das hörte. Ich kann sagen, es war in mir ein Gefühl wie Milch, Sonne und Wodka" (209).

Even when selecting his literary model from works of earlier centuries, the young protagonist remains motivated by a desire to identify with the protagonist, although there is the added attraction of differences (of social context, language, etc.) assisting in the definition of identity of self. Edgar Wibeau's reading of Goethe's Werther is of this kind. For all we know the same might be true as regards Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, a book about which Edgar says little more than that he ranks it alongside The Catcher in the Rye. His initial reaction to eighteenth-century Goethean German (whose source he is unaware of) is unmistakably negative: "Leute, das kann wirklich kein Schwein lesen" (36). But he then proceeds to devour the book in three hours' uninterrupted reading and from then on finds it impossible to resist its fascination for him. What fascinates him most is the perfect balance in his own response between identification with and detachment from Werther. Edgar's reception of his literary model can be described as dynamic rather than static. It fits Flaker's more general observation on the "Jeans Prosa" scene that there are

sehr charakteristische Texte, die die Existenz eines kulturellen Textes als Vorlage voraussetzen, vor deren Hintergrund der gesamte zeitgenössische Text zu lesen ist (175)⁸⁰.

Significantly, amongst the texts discussed here Plenzdorf's is the only one which takes full advantage of this device, while the others tend to restrict themselves to a "static", i.e. uncritical identification with literary models.

A perfect example of this is Tolja in Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit who has so totally immersed himself into the teachings of Marcus Aurelius that he is unable to distinguish between the latter's and his own ideas when using them as a weapon against the world:

Ich weiß nicht, warum Tolja damals nicht zugab, daß er das alles von Mark Aurel hatte ... Aber vielleicht hatte er die Sätze schon so oft gedacht, daß er bereits glaubte, sie seien von ihm (67).

Yana herself falls victim to this deception and it is left to the impeccable FDJ-Sekretär Walter to shatter her illusions regarding Tolja's originality of thought. Tolja's empathetic study of Beckett's End Game is interpreted by her as an attempt to capture an aspect of life which is usually ignored in literature: "Es fängt etwas ein. Das Verrückte im Leben" (30).

2.4.2 The struggle against those in authority

I

What is it these young people are rebelling against? The answer is an obvious one: the target of their revolt are those in authority, whether parents, teachers, the police, party functionaries, bureaucrats. They represent adult society which threatens to stifle the young individual's sense of identity and personal freedom.

Parents of young rebels come in three categories: Firstly, as in Das Jahr und Katrin, they can be heroic images, overawing and distant, public property, objects of worship but not of love. Michael's revolt is motivated by his need to dissociate himself from these images and to appropriate his parents for himself as individuals - a prerequisite for the growth of his own sense of identity. As his parents are neither physically nor even spiritually present and as their images are the creations of society, Michael's resistance is directed at those he sees as depriving him of having a private relationship with his mother and father, that is society at large and, in particular, his teachers and classmates. His attempts to shock them into taking cognizance of him as an individual in his own right lead to his suspension from school. One year's exposure to real life when he is judged purely on his own merits and faults, brings about his integration into the school world and the world in general as well as his acceptance of his parents.

For purely historical reasons, Michael Haller stands alone amongst young protagonists in East German works of the seventies (which earmarks him as a figure conceived at a very much earlier date): By the seventies, the heroic figures of anti-fascism belong not to the parents' but to the grandparents' generation which completely changes their emotional impact on the young (see below).

Secondly, there are those parents who are still caught in outmoded bourgeois and petit-bourgeois habits and attitudes and thereby arouse their children's resistance. Tolja's sense of deep insecurity must be explained in this way: his father, the manager of a small *branch of a bank*, for whom nothing is more sacred than correct accounts and who not only expects his son to live up to his standards but also to achieve in academic and career terms what he, the father, was denied; and his mother, a simple, warm-hearted and stupid woman who can offer her son no genuine emotional support in his struggle to establish his identity.

Similarly, Katrin in Das Jahr und Katrin has suffered under the ideological backwardness of her parents and has learnt to detach herself from them and to assimilate new values of her own. Alexander in Zwischen zwei Nächten has gone through a traumatic childhood with parents who were deeply steeped into fascist ideology and after their death represent no more to him than objects of loathing and contempt. His rebelliousness is but the other side of a great emotional insecurity which to overcome in him requires constant and patient effort on the part of the collective. Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi does not appear to be suffering from any sense of insecurity but has also

felt the need to get away from his father, an authoritarian, unimaginative, self-satisfied, extremely "normal" man whose sole ambition has been to see his son rise to greater social heights than he himself has ever been able to reach. Norman's decision not to enter higher education we have found to be an act of opposition to his father's wishes. Finally, there is Reinhold in Zwischen zwei Nächten who also faces similar problems. His father, whose educational aspirations were disappointed through lack of opportunity, now wants his son to achieve what was denied him; the son's reaction is one of common sense: Why does not his father avail himself of existing opportunities rather than rely only on his son to do so?

The third, and to us most interesting, as novel, category of parents are those who arouse their children's opposition through what looks to them like an exaggerated dedication to career, social and ideological commitments and material possessions at the expense of parental involvement with the young. It is the combination of an unquestioning acceptance of socialism in its existing form and the equally unquestioning assumption that working for socialism must pay off and be somehow measurable in material terms, that upsets the children. They believe that they themselves ought to have priority in their parents' lives, that existing socialism and its creations are perhaps not quite as flawless as the older generation wants to see them and that material rewards are anything but the be-all and end-all. In their search for warmth, understanding and idealist values, the young are confronted with cold efficiency, detachment and unconcealed materialism.

Yana in Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit, though interestingly never questioning her parents' values and full of admiration for their achievements, nevertheless has a sense of having been deprived of parental love and attention (18). Particularly as a small child she had seen little of her parents as they were absorbed by professional and political commitments. A faint sense of insecurity and emotional deprivation continues to inform her relationships with the male sex.

Edgar Wibeau in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. has none of Yana's naive faith in the appropriateness of her parents' attitudes and life style. His mother is described as the efficient, successful career woman so frequently encountered in East German literature of that decade. In her world, men seem to be redundant. Their contribution to family life and the upbringing of children is nil or even harmful (23), and their sexual inclinations merely upset the social order carefully created by moral and orderly women such as Frau Wibeau. Her pride in her son partly rests on the mistaken assumption that Edgar had no sexual contact with girls while under her regime (which Edgar is quick to deny, 10); and to avoid contagion she did her best to quash any budding communication between the boy and his father (21). Her involvement with her job and determination to ignore and exclude from her life whatever happens not to fit her view of the world has made her miss out on important aspects of Edgar's development. His escape from home remains inexplicable to her until she constructs her own explanation to match her beliefs: "Edgar hat einfach die Konsequenzen der Sache gescheut [i.e. of dropping the iron plate on his trainer's foot] und ist deshalb weg" (15). We, as Edgar's confidants, know that she is utterly mistaken.

Edgar's father has only featured as an image and not as a real person in the boy's life. Edgar's leaving home can be seen as a search for his father in whom he expects to find a model and ally, someone who, like him, was made by Frau Wibeau to arrange his life to match her expectations and who, having failed to match them, preferred to remove himself from her sphere of influence; someone who placed imagination above reason, creativity above a well-planned career, personal freedom above material and social success. On meeting his father (without the latter's being aware of their relationship) he realizes that his father, though pleasantly different from his mother, is not the man he had hoped to find.

Gitti's feelings towards her mother (in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw) closely resemble Edgar's although her reactions strike us as much less tolerant and sympathetic than his. She finds her mother (an expert in refrigeration technology) cold and repays her in her own currency: When, early on her hitch-hiking trip with young Jan, a car stops and her mother - "geblümte Bluse ... auf hohen Absätzen" (109) - emerges, Gitti meets her with undiluted sarcasm (109-112). The mother's genuine-sounding effort to explain her own preoccupation with career and material goods by reference to past deprivation: "Vielleicht denken wir wirklich zuviel ans Materielle, Vater und ich. Es war eine armselige Zeit, wo wir so alt waren wie du" (111) leaves Gitti unmoved: "Dafür kann ich nichts". And mother and daughter part without Gitti having made the slightest concession to her mother or having given the faintest indication that she too is upset or has any warmer feelings for her:

Sie sagte: Es gibt Dinge, bei denen man drauf-
zahlt. Das ist eklig, aber man stirbt nicht darüber.
Na prima, sagte ich, daß du es so siehst (112).

As regards her father, a biochemist, Gitti treats him as her mother's weaker ally. He too adores their two-room "Datsche", is keen to drive a car to work rather than having to walk it or fight with his wife over which of them is to have the car (53), devotes his free time to his collections of coins and model locomotives rather than to his daughter (8, 42ff.) and gives in to spurious arguments instead of defending his daughter's claim to be delegated to the EOS (30).

Similar reactions come from Jimmy and Sabine (in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt) and Klaus (in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an). All three regard their parents as lacking in parental affection, understanding and dedication, and accuse them of having been overpre-occupied with material and social success. Jimmy has had to fend for himself when his parents were away on business, leaving him with a refrigerator filled with provisions and plenty of money to spend but without anyone to talk to and confide in. Sabine's background is somewhat different in that her mother does not go to work (59) but identifies fully and uncritically with her husband's activities, wishes and needs: "Johanna ... war wunschlos glücklich mit ihrem Mann und froh, wenn sie ihn gelöst und heiter stimmen konnte" (67). There is no genuine communication between mother and daughter as the mother's views are slavish copies of her husband's, a family dictator of narrowly materialist and autocratic views (63). Sabine reacts towards her mother with contempt (65), while harbouring active dislike for her father and

his preoccupation with status symbols (house, red Wartburg, children he can be proud of, 53, 65). She is fully aware of the fact that he has no time for someone like herself who fails to fit his expectations, and despises him for considering himself a pillar of socialist society when, in fact, his attitudes are no different from those normally associated with capitalist societies.

Like Sabine, Klaus (in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an) fails to live up to middle-class family expectations. The father's attitude towards his son Klaus is unambiguously contemptuous:

Ich bin der Versager in der Familie. Meine Schwester studiert Medizin. Alle sind sie was geworden, bloß ich nicht. Lange Haare, kurzer Verstand, wie sich mein Vater auszudrücken pflegte (36).

His mother is uncritically devoted to her husband:

Für die ist mein Vater der liebe Gott persönlich. Ich meine nicht, daß sie fies ist, meine Mutter ist bestimmt nicht fies, nur sie findet eben alles, was mein Alter macht und sagt, richtig (36).

Klaus' efforts to establish an identity of his own are bound to run into difficulty in the face of such overawing prejudice. But as he is gentle and somewhat lethargic by nature, he does not rebel but resigns himself to his fate, merely on occasion risking a touch of irony.

Perhaps the most uncompromisingly negative relationship between a young rebel and his parents is that described by Jakobs in Die Interviewer,

where there is no indication at all that the gulf separating the two sides is, even momentarily, bridged by a flicker of mutual understanding. Ernst sees his parents (a psychologist his father and an economist his mother) as dominated by materialism and careerism, both of which he rejects. By temperament, he certainly feels closer to his father. But as he too is vulnerable and proud, neither is prepared to allow the other an insight into his real feelings. Ernst, who is longing to detect an opportunity where his father shows himself weak and enlists his son's support, finds him forever hiding behind a façade of superiority and aloofness, never admitting to being an extremely insecure and even unstable person. On the occasion of the father's visit to his son's school, the latter is fully set to defend him against his classmates should there be any need or opportunity:

Er hatte gehofft, seinen Vater in auswegloser Situation zu finden, dann wäre er aufgestanden und hätte sich an seine Seite gestellt, um mit ihm gegen Tod und Teufel zu kämpfen. Statt dessen hatte er ihn in einer anderen Art von Selbstwußtsein erlebt und in einer anderen Art von Erfolg. Erfolg haben, ist Unfug, dachte Ernst, wer das Gegenteil sagt, wünscht Erfolg um jeden Preis. Diesen Preis will ich nicht zahlen, dachte Ernst, und wahrscheinlich ist solcherart Streben nach Erfolg ein Zeichen von Schwäche. Ich dagegen bin stark, denn ich will nicht siegen (214-5).

But the opportunity for feeling and openly demonstrating solidarity with his father does not arise as Radek's social skills are sufficiently developed to avoid any such eventuality:

Er hat es geschafft, dachte Ernst, er weiß immer, wie er es schaffen wird. Das also bedeutet es, Erfolg zu haben, dachte Ernst, sich anpassen ... Selbst die Unsicherheit, die er gezeigt hat, dachte Ernst, ist Teil seiner Taktik. Er soll machen, was er will, und ich werde tun, was ich für richtig halte (214).

Ernst's dissatisfaction with his mother (an "ökonomischer Direktor") is equally strong, though not, it seems, a source of equally intense pain. She neglects him over her job or, falling into the other extreme, treats him as if he were still a baby or rather a toy designed for her relaxation. Ernst is clever enough to exploit her longing for demonstrations of love and admiration for his own purposes, e.g. for scoring points over his father in their frequent verbal wrestles during which he is quick to secure his mother's support. But occasionally his deep sadness erupts in the form of cutting remarks: "Was geht mich eine Frau an, die nachts um elf nach Hause kommt, weil sie Direktor ist, rief Ernst, ich will eine Mutter" (77-8). For both parties, life at home becomes a battle for survival, a struggle to score points over the other side, with Ernst's mother, most of the time, being blissfully unaware of the subtle turnings this takes and his father seeing it all happen but being unable to do anything about it: a classic conflict between the generations with no hint as to how it might be solved.

II

Next to parents it is quite naturally the school that offers a target for young people's rebellion against inhibiting authority. Interestingly enough, though, there is little evidence of teachers and heads meeting with 'objective', i.e. justifiable, criticism of the kind parents encounter. If weaknesses are shown to exist in their attitudes and behaviour, then they tend to be explained in terms of general human frailty which, after all, cannot be expected totally to by-pass the teaching profession.

It is tempting to speculate on the reason for this 'preferential treatment' of school authority in comparison to parental authority. The most obvious explanation might be that, while parents are not directly under the control of the state and therefore, to a certain extent, a 'matter of luck', teachers and school heads are appointed and trained by the state and have undergone moral and ideological tests as to their suitability for this function, thus putting the blame for any failure to fulfil their role satisfactorily more firmly on the state. This may explain why, at a time when a critical attitude towards parents has almost become the norm amongst young protagonists, a similar attitude towards holders of educational authority appears to be more or less taboo. As can be expected, this applies even more to any criticism of the police or, above all, of party functionaries. Thus the degree of permissible criticism seems to be in reverse proportion to the amount of direct accountability of state and Party for the appointment of the adult concerned.

Where educationalists are introduced as holders of authority who arouse young people's resistance, they are more often than not a target for praise rather than the reverse. In Das Jahr und Katrin, the teacher Herr Kufalt, on being faced with a rebellious Michael who insists on sporting a provocative hair-style and being generally obstreperous, proves himself to be perfectly up to the duel of words in front of an expectant class (42-5). Even more so the head of the school, Herr Steinbrenner, whose superior, authoritative and nevertheless understanding and humane handling of the problem (47-51, 59, 117) meets with everyone's approval and respect, including, retrospectively,

Michael's. The boy's return to school after one year's suspension is in itself evidence of the appropriateness of Steinbrenner's judgment (119).

In Heiduczek's novel Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit, teachers are shown to be equally competent and sympathetic and their students' rebelliousness is merely a reflection of the inner turmoil they are experiencing. During her time at the ABF it is Herr Dinter, the German master, whom Yana occasionally gets upset about because she feels misunderstood (38-9). But she knows at the time of telling her story that he knew her better than most and was merely trying to help her:

Eigentlich begreife ich erst heute, was er von mir wollte. Er hatte erkannt, daß meine Hingabe für die anderen nur eine andere Form meiner Ichsucht war (39).

Herr Stengel, the civics master, nick-named "Che Guevara" (94), reveals himself to be a highly competent and psychologically skilled teacher who gains his pupils' confidence and cajoles them into learning with enjoyment what might otherwise have bored them as mere lifeless theory (92-8). And even the chemistry master, nick-named "Bubi", who has problems keeping discipline amongst his students, is nevertheless depicted in a sympathetic manner (48-9). At university, there is the chemistry assistant who takes Tolja's seminar group (84): He displays considerable strength of character when faced with Yana's spiky resistance and carefully cultivated arrogance (86). In retrospect, unambiguous praise is given to the deputy section leader for being enthusiastic,

competent, forthright and fair:

Er ist seit zwei Jahren bei uns. Zuvor hat er im Kombinat gearbeitet, irgendwo in der Forschung. Ich habe es gern, wenn er bei den Versammlungen dabei ist. Er redet nicht herum und macht einem nichts vor (103).

Towards the mid-seventies, the uniformly glowing picture of school authority and its implementation acquires greater variety and begins to include some critical features. In Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt, educationalists for better or for worse, are of great influence on Sabine's life and development, and her rejection of authority is very much directed against them. At school it is Herr Hardtgreb, Sabine's form master from the fifth to the eighth form (101), later head of the school; he disappoints her sense of fairness, honesty and justice and thereby makes her turn from a keen student into an outright opponent of the whole system. On one occasion she tells him off in front of the class:

Die Dreien vermeiden Sie, aber wie machen Sie denn das? Diktate lassen Sie zur Probe vorher schreiben, bis sie sitzen. Die leistungsschwachen Schüler kriegen vorbereitete Fragen gestellt und können ihre Antworten auswendig lernen, sie kriegen für schwache Leistungen noch Zweien bei Ihnen. Manchmal zensieren Sie schon den guten Willen. Und Mitarbeit wird zu Fachnoten, das ist doch frisiert und nicht real! (103).

Sabine's class-mates, even if they see through Hardtgreb's fraud, keep their insights to themselves. "Ich für meine Person rede was, was der Lehrer hören will" (104), says one of them and consequently ensures his good marks in civics (104). Sabine rejects any such compromises:

... sie legte es direkt darauf an, daß sich ihre Leistungen verschlechterten, sie entwickelte sich zum Wortführer der negativen Kräfte in der Klasse, machte die Leitung madig, ihre Freundschaft mit Hansel Voigt ging auch in die Brüche, sie tat nur noch das, was ihr Spaß machte (104).

In the borstal where she arrives in 1972 at the age of 17 (129), Sabine starts off by isolating herself from everyone and displaying a brusque, chillingly forthright and totally uncompromising behaviour. Her first tutor there, Gundel Wachtel, re-inforces her withdrawal into herself by insisting that educational success must be measured only by the extent to which borstal inmates abide by rules and regulations, irrespective of any progress or otherwise in their personal development. Her colleague, Frau Knuth, characterizes her as "ein saturierter FDJLer" in need of "zwei Flaschen Wein, bis sie ihre letzte Korsettstange herausdrehen kann" (133). When Frau Knuth begins to exert her influence on Sabine, the ice begins to melt, and the girl's conception of personal freedom changes radically:

Bisher lehnte sie alles ab und sah darin eine Voraussetzung für ihre Vorstellung von der Freiheit. Nun aber ergiff sie Partei für das Menschliche, für das Humane ... (136).

In accepting her election as FDJ Secretary Sabine demonstrates that she has come to see freedom as the freedom to take on responsibility for others rather than the freedom from any duty (144). This change of heart is brought about by Frau Knuth's personal example and faith in the good sides of Sabine's personality, the insistence on what her colleagues tend to brush aside as a Utopian idea:

Es darf keinem gleichgültig sein, wie die Jugendlichen entlassen werden, mit welcher Einstellung zum Leben, denn wir machen den Sozialismus nicht ohne sie, sondern auch für sie. ... sie sind keine Menschen zweiter oder dritter Klasse (50).

Sabine's consequent behaviour fully justifies Frau Knuth's faith in

her: Her initial resistance gives way to trust and a new view of

what socialism really means:

... sie ... sagte, sie hätte bei uns zum ersten Male erlebt, wie eine richtige Familie funktioniert, in der die Frau gleichberechtigt ist, in der die Kinder nicht geschlagen oder niedergebrüllt werden, kein Terror, auch wenn man nicht die Meinung des andern teilte: "... Sie und Ihr Mann sind für mich das geworden, was ich mir unter Sozialisten vorstelle" (143).

In other words, where parents have failed, the school has scored a success.

Another youngster who has at least a fleeting acquaintance with a

borstal receives less sympathetic treatment: Ernst in Jakob's

Der Interviewer, spends a brief period in such an institution after

having been picked up by the police on his attempted escape from

home. In a brief conversation with Ernst's father, the director,

Dr Wohro, simultaneously displays professional conscientiousness and

an utter lack of understanding for Ernst's psychological state. His

"gesicherte Erfahrungen mit Jugendlichen" (257) have been thoroughly

upset and he makes no attempt to conceal his puzzlement. His liberal

use of professional jargon - "überstellt", "vagabundierend aufge-

griffen", "höchst bedenkliches Bild", "kleinste Zelle der Gesellschaft"

(256-7) - indicates an unwillingness to allow himself independent thought and response.

Works less overtly concerned with ideological and moral issues, such as Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., Die Reise nach Jaroslaw, and Ich fange mit dem Anfang an, portray teachers in more neutral terms. *Teachers are* members of adult society, vested with a certain authority and as such obvious targets for youthful criticism and resistance. Meister Flemming in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. fails to see what upsets young Wibeau whom he had known as a model student (13). Gitti's teachers (in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw) seem indifferent to her problems; in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an we hear of a teacher who speaks and thinks in socialist clichés and is unable (or unwilling) to distinguish between genuine loyalty to the socialist cause and mere lip-service aimed to guarantee good marks. She attracts Petra's hatred because she turns the whole class into "eine Herde kleiner Heuchler, in der jeder nur das antwortete, was der Lehrer hören wollte" (75):

Diese Frau sah schon so aus, eine unmögliche Dauerwelle und um die Lippen ein Dauerlächeln, bei dem ich mich manchmal gefragt habe, ob sie sich das beim Friseur gleich mit legen läßt. Sprach sie von ihrer Familie - und das tat sie ziemlich oft -, sprach sie immer von ihrem "kleinen sozialistischen Kollektiv", und das meinte sie nicht etwa ironisch, sondern bierernst, wie sie überhaupt ihre Sätze alle aus der Druckerei des "ND" holte. ... Und immer kam ich ihr mit Fragen, weil sie Fragen haßte. Sie wollte Antworten, eindeutige Antworten. Prinzipiell war ihr Lieblingswort, und sie maß jede Antwort an der Grundfrage, die klar sein mußte (76).

The picture of this unthinking, dogmatic German mistress and her stereotype manner of talking is, however, counterbalanced by that of the form mistress who makes every effort to do justice to her pupils, and is thoroughly honest and fair. Yet, as she is chronically overworked, she is unable to devote more than a minimum of time to them and thereby loses the opportunity of exerting a significant influence on the development of their personalities. The same applies to most of her colleagues. Never in her twelve years at school has Petra been asked by a teacher to join her/him for a cup of tea and have a chat: "So ist das mit unseren Lehrern, für alles mögliche müssen sie Zeit haben, nur für ihre Schüler nicht" (77).

The least favourable picture of educationalists is that conveyed in eintreffe heute as seen through the eyes of the girl Agnes. She experiences profound disappointment at the "Parteischule" where secrecy is ranked above honesty and appearances are kept up at any price. Neither the principal, Herr Semrau, nor his young colleague (and Petra's lover) Winfried Platen, has the courage to acknowledge and tell the truth if this entails a risk to their prestige and good name. Agnes, the young rebel, leaves them in no doubt as to her contempt for such an attitude. This brings about her expulsion from the school (which, eventually, turns out to have been a blessing in disguise).

III

Encounters with the police, as the guardians of law and order, are inevitable in the lives of young people whose behaviour is informed by an overwhelming desire to express their individual needs and character. Yet, as in the books discussed, the "feste Boden des Sozialismus" is never abandoned, these encounters take place in an atmosphere of basic good humour (as opposed to those in "antagonistic" works where the police, or rather the Secret Service agents, represent the brutal instruments of brutal force⁸¹⁾.

Good humour sets the tone for Gitti's experience with the police (in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw), whether in Berlin, during her vigil on the park bench behind the Nordbahnhof (65-6) or, later on (127-133), on the beach of the Baltic Sea after she has spent a night with Jan in the shelter of two beach chairs. In both cases Gitti displays a cheekily arrogant attitude and emerges victorious from these skirmishes. The Berlin policeman is shown up as ignorant of Ernest Hemingway's works, while his colleague is speedily put in his place when Jan reveals his Polish nationality. Honesty and kindness, though coupled with limited intellectual prowess and total absence of a sense of humour, are their outstanding characteristics, and they are easily outwitted by a bright articulate youngster.

Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi behaves similarly overbearingly towards the police, but also in a non-hostile fashion. As the fulfilment of his wish to get away from everyday routine life

depends on his getting a visa in the shortest possible time, he does his best to adapt his outer appearance, behaviour and speech to their bureaucratic requirements, particularly after having learnt that obstreperousness in these circles merely serves to create unwillingness to oblige:

Aus Erfahrung klug, hatte ich mich sozusagen kostümiert: Ich trug den Anzug, den ich vor drei Jahren in eine Schwankecke gepackt hatte, er spannte an allen Ecken und Enden und warf wulstige Falten, weißes Hemd und Schlips, gräßlich anzusehen, unsägliches Gefühl. Das Haar hatte ich mir in klatschnassem Zustand an die Kopfhaut gekämmt, fein säuberlich hinter die Ohren. Ich sah aus wie ein Konfirmand auf vergilbten Fotos (21).

His appearance is matched by a carefully designed speech to suit the demands of the occasion:

Und jetzt ließ ich meine ausgetüftelte Rede vom Stapel, betont selbstbewußt, ich hatte geübt. Sowohl Lautstärke als auch Sprechtempo, Gesichtsausdruck und natürlich den Inhalt. Dabei hielt ich mich streng an die goldene Regel des Maschinenschlossers: Nicht so genau wie möglich, sondern so genau wie nötig (21).

Good humour and understanding for men who are only doing their job also governs the reactions of Klaus in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an, although this does not totally spare him unpleasant encounters with the police. In the youth camp, he and Petra are picked up after a late-night party (38), and they are faced with the prospect of a fine for smoking in a tent (40). The two apply their joint psychological skills and successfully distract the man's attention until

he has totally forgotten his original mission. While Petra acts the naive and helpless girl, Klaus side-tracks the guardian of law and order by telling him fantastic stories. Finally Petra begins to feel more and more uneasy about the situation:

Ich überlegte krampfhaft, wie ich das Gespräch wieder in den Griff kriegen konnte. Mir war nicht wohl neben diesem Hilfssherriff, und wenn der merkte, daß Klaus ihn auf den Arm nahm, na, gute Nacht. Ich kannte diese Typen aus unserer Trabantzeit, wo schnell mal einer meinem Vater fünf Mark abgeknöpft hat, wenn der zu lange im Parkverbot hielt oder so. Das Schlimme daran waren nie die fünf Mark, obwohl uns das Geld nicht nachlief, nein, das Schlimme war ihre ungeheure Humorlosigkeit. Es gibt auch unter den richtigen Polizisten nicht viele mit Humor, aber unter den Helfern gibt es nullkommanull. Mein Vater nannte sie die Luftballons. Da kommt wieder so ein Luftballon, sagte er, wenn fünf Mark fällig waren (42).

A lack of sense of humour is the main flaw of the two young policemen who take offence at Klaus' behaviour one Saturday afternoon in a subway under the Alex in East Berlin. Klaus, who remains cool and polite, though gently mocking throughout, is taken to the police station where he is unjustly accused of having destroyed public property. After his release he rejoins his friends in the milk-bar and to Petra's horror expresses sympathy with the attitudes of the police:

Irgendwie haben sie recht, sagte Klaus mit einemmal. ... Wie sollen sie denn wissen, wer ich bin? Vielleicht wollte ich die Kacheln zerschlagen; es gibt doch genug von der Sorte, die alles demolieren müssen (57).

Klaus' understanding does not preclude a final more serious encounter with the police. During Petra's absence from Berlin, Klaus is arrested for obstructing an officer in the performance of his duty: After having been stopped four times on his moped, for no apparent reason, he loses self-control the fifth time and hits out. Why is it, Petra wonders, that he seems to arouse suspicion wherever he appears?

Immer gerät er mit Ordnungshütern zusammen, ich weiß nicht warum, aber irgendwie ist er wohl in ihren Augen nicht in Ordnung. Vielleicht stellen sie sich die Ordnung anders vor ... (119).

However, even at this point there is no suggestion of any serious criticism of the police, but of an underlying acceptance of the inevitable discrepancies between their view of society and that held by the young. Each is justified and has its place in the overall context of the state, and mutual tolerance is needed to avoid or soften clashes between them.

This impression is further confirmed by the generally sympathetic atmosphere between the young and the police in Dorothea Kleine's eintreffen heute. Agnes and the other girls in the brigade are determined to stand by their brigadeer, Antonia Mohrmann, who is in police custody, while also accepting that it is the duty of the police to investigate her case. Admittedly, Agnes does wonder how she, a loyal citizen, comes to be threatened by the state she has tried so hard to serve:

Mir war nun doch sonderbar zumute, war ich doch
Bürger dieses Landes, ich liebte dieses Land,

diente ihm, hatte mich ihm geschworen, mich und meine Zukunft, und da sollte ich nun von diesem Staat bestraft werden? (210)

But there is never any indication of animosity or bitterness, and the police are credited with quite some psychological skill in handling the girls:

Hier machte unser freundlicher Vorleser eine Pause, er wollte uns ganz in den Genuß dieser schönen, gerechten Worte und auch der angedrohten fünf Jahre kommen lassen. Er war ein Psychologe vor dem Herrn, er erreichte, was er erreichen wollte, ... (210-1).

IV

The highest authority the young rebel in East Germany can face is the Socialist Unity Party. In his search for self-identity and personal freedom he is bound to come up against it at some stage. Significantly however, in the texts studied there is no instance of a serious collision of interests between the two sides; this would have represented an antagonistic conflict unacceptable within the context of socialist literature even after the abolition of certain taboos in 1971. While at the levels of parental and educational authority problems may remain unsolved and, for the individual, even insoluble, this cannot be tolerated in the context of Party authority.

Looking at the texts from this angle, we find them falling into two groups: those where the 'correct' standards are set by the

representatives of the Party, i.e. usually the FDJ Secretaries; and those where the Party's authority hardly comes into the picture, making for a further erosion of the previously inevitable contrast between 'positive' and 'negative' heroes. The first group of texts consists of the novels by Heiduczek, Gerisch, Kruschel and Kleine. In each of them the representative of the Party is a most likable, impressive, reliable, responsible and mature young man whose positive qualities outweigh by far those found in any of his contemporaries; it is he who sets the standards by which the young protagonist's moral and social progress is judged.

In Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit it is Walter, formerly "Beststudent an der ABF" (42), now FDJ Secretary at the university where Yana and Tolja are enrolled. His speeches, though "ganz auf die Schnelle zusammengehauen" (43), are considered worthy of ministerial attention and of being printed in Neues Deutschland. Walter is not only a reliable, responsible, thoroughly committed socialist but also commands great kindness, understanding and a sense of humour (42). His great strength is that he uses his time and energies in a purposeful manner, unlike Tolja and Yana herself (while under Tolja's influence):

Er sah sofort das Wesentliche. Er verplemperte sich nicht. Tolja verplemperte sich und ich auch. Walter wußte schon in der ersten Schulklasse, was er werden wollte (45).

Even when rejected by Yana in favour of good-for-nothing Tolja, Walter remains a friend offering moral and physical support. Only when Yana

is trying to exploit his feelings for her in order to help Tolja (111) does he explode, because she is asking him to act counter to the interests of the Party and society at large:

"Du bist ein mieses, niederträchtiges Weibchen", sagte er. "Die anderen sind für dich ein Dreck, wenn nur deinem Tolja nichts passiert. Alles, was du siehst, siehst du nur noch durch ihn ... Ich werde versuchen, für deinen Tolja etwas zu machen, obwohl ich weiß, daß es keinen Zweck hat und daß es falsch ist. Aber ich bin eben so verrückt" (112).

Walter is therefore not only good and strong but also loving and human, of great personal integrity as well as loyalty to the Party. Yana's rejection of him in favour of Tolja - with hindsight she herself recognizes it to have been a mistake - does not tempt him to take advantage of her plight.

In Kruschel's Das Jahr und Katrin the authority of the Party remains fully intact. Its representatives cannot be blamed for the individual's personal weaknesses, and are being seen to act correctly and understandingly as well as, ultimately, successfully. For Michael, the ultimate test comes when he himself is offered the post of FDJ Secretary for the youth project (182): His strengths are recognized publicly and, instead of being wasted in blind opposition, are being placed at the service of the community.

In Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt the FDJ Secretary is again the most active, intelligent, generally likable and sympathetic character in the book. Klaus Nettelbeck's untiring work contributes greatly

towards Sabine's eventual re-integration into society. He enters her private life after her ephemeral boyfriends, such as Jimmy and Atsche, the charming egoists, have been ousted. The author takes great care to depict this model youth as infallible. Any minor weaknesses merely underline his humanity (325). He is even strong enough to take criticism and learn from it - the best possible incentive for Sabine to emulate him (355).

Kleine's eintreffen heute also has its impressive Party Secretary, Robert Merten (159ff, 199ff) about whose intelligence, perceptiveness, humanity and good will we are never in any doubt. When a target of opposition, he demonstrates self-control and unwavering loyalty to his cause. His integrity provides a counterbalance to the dogmatic and somewhat less responsible attitudes displayed by the staff at the "Parteischule" where Agnes is expelled for misdemeanour. This is an indication of a distinction being drawn amongst Party functionaries themselves: There are those who work in the sheltered atmosphere of theory and those who, like Robert Merten, are exposed to the complex reality of work where Party doctrines have to prove their worth. It is the latter who represent the true pillars of socialism and whom no young rebel is ultimately able or willing to oppose.

V

To sum up: Young people's rebelliousness is naturally directed at those who seem to them to be setting up the barriers that stand in the way of their personal freedom. Parents, teachers, the police, Party officials - these are the holders of authority young East Germans are likely to come in contact with. What we have found is that the fierceness of their opposition decreases in direct proportion to the degree of accountability of state and Party for the attitudes and actions of those opposed. Here, we may conclude, lies an, if not the, answer to the question what the main difference between 'antagonistic' and 'non-antagonistic' problems is. To quote from Brigitte Stuhlmachers's illuminating comparison between Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. and three bourgeois dramas on the problems of the young⁸²:

Der Generationskonflikt bietet sich als tradierter, reicher, nichtantagonistischer, aber sehr scharfer Konflikt an. Mit seiner Potenz, gesellschaftliche und individuelle Entwicklungsprobleme miteinander verbunden aufzunehmen, ist er für die Gegenwartsliteratur ebenso brauchbar, wie er sozialanalytisch zur direktesten Zustandsbeschreibung und Wirklichkeitsaufnahme einsetzbar ist⁸³.

2.4.3 Identification with the old and nostalgia for the past

I

If in East German works of the seventies, parents have, in the eyes of the young, come to stand for impersonal efficiency, career ambition and materialism - all at the expense of emotional and moral commitment to their fellowmen in general and their children in particular - the opposite is true regarding grandparents and their generation. Indeed, they are seen as possessing precisely those properties whose absence in the middle generation causes the friction between the latter and their children.

There are three factors which clearly distinguish the old from the middle generation: Firstly, the fullness of the lives that lie behind them not only informs their present attitudes but also constitutes ample evidence of their personal as well as ideological integrity. In the seventies, the old generation in East German society are the last to have experienced heroic action and adventure, to have risked their lives and possessions for the ideals which this society proclaims to uphold; indeed, they are the creators and founders of this society, which their sons and daughters are merely trying to consolidate and preserve. They are also the last generation to have moved around in the world as yet undivided by an Iron Curtain. To them, Spain, France, Latin America are places they have seen with their own eyes, while to all those younger than themselves they are, and are likely to remain, no more than names on the map of the world⁸⁴.

The second factor, closely linked with the first, are the special personal characteristics associated with the old. They are portrayed as warm, affectionate, spontaneous, creative and rich personalities, young in heart if not also in body, with a sense of humour as well as common sense; as having a generous, positive understanding and a direct way of tackling life's problems when and where it is required. This contrasts with the picture we are given of the middle generation who focus on the eradication of unwanted elements and are bent on the creation of material wealth for themselves and their society. Religion, beauty and art in all their manifestations are still sources of inspiration to the old, adding extra dimensions to their sensitivities and lives, while those making up the middle generation have tended to neglect their personal development and to restrict their horizon to the immediate necessities of day-to-day routine within a tightly and rationally planned society.

Thirdly, and closely connected with points one and two, the representatives of the older generation are beginning to move into the position of social outsiders. Being in their sixties and seventies, they are either retired or of retiring age, markedly different in experience, outlook, taste and character from those coming after them, who are typical of a society that tends to favour the impersonal, anonymous, assimilated, rational and materialistic at the expense of the original, distinctive, individualistic, imaginative and idealistic. They still tend to be respected, possibly even feared, but are also smiled at, relics of a time about to recede into the background of general awareness.

All three factors mentioned are immensely attractive to the young: the natural authority which emanates from the lives and characters of the older citizens as well as their whole outlook on life create a direct affinity with them. Their values tend to tally with those of the young: not order for order's sake or cleanliness for cleanliness's sake, not material success and social prestige at almost any cost - but humaneness, warmth, personal integrity, a widening of mental and physical horizons, an emotional and imaginative rather than a rational approach to life and all it offers. To this must be added the very significant practical consideration that in a society chronically short of labour, it is only the young and the old that do actually have time for their private lives, for developing personal interests and pursuing activities other than those immediately connected with the world of work. In the lives of children and young people, grandmothers, grandfathers and older people in general naturally take the place formerly occupied by parents, particularly mothers, thus making for an even closer bond between the two generations of the young and the old.

There are those who, in spite of old age and physical disability, have remained young in heart, strong and active: for instance, sixty-year-old Frieda Krüger in Kleine's eintreffen heute, "eine starke Frau", though suffering from a swelling of the legs, "Metallarbeiterin und Kreisleitungsmitglied" (6), bearer of the "Vaterländischer Verdienstorden in Silber" (8), prepared to take on everyone in town in order to ensure that justice is done to her friend Henriette Koch. Frieda Krüger turns out to be the only one capable of weighing a

lifetime's commitment to the cause of socialism against a moment's weakness. Rather than take on a well-paid full-time post in the Union, she chooses to continue working in the factory and do her party work on an honorary basis:

Großmutter stanzt Bleche, gut, gegen Bleche-
stanzen ist im Prinzip nichts zu sagen, die
Volkswirtschaft braucht gestanzte Bleche, obwohl
sich mit der Zeit der politische Horizont eines
Stanzers bis zum Rand seiner Bleche verengen
kann. Ihr BGL-Vorsitzender und ich waren der
Meinung, daß Großmutter nicht ewig Bleche
stanzen solle, sie konnte in der Gewerkschaft
hauptamtliche Arbeit machen, das, was sie
früher ohne Geld gemacht hatte, könnte sie
jetzt mit Geld machen, ohne die scheußlichen
drei Schichten.

Sie weigerte sich, sie war engstirnig und un-
belehrbar, sie könne den Geruch von Büro nicht
vertragen, sagte sie, und im Büro bestehe die
Gefahr, daß man sich von der Basis löse. Ich
konnte ihre Argumente exakt und wissenschaft-
lich, wie es eben meine Art war, zerschlagen,
Eindruck hat es jedoch nie auf sie gemacht (15).

Her young granddaughter (or rather, as it turns out in the story, her adopted granddaughter) Agnes finds her grandmother's attitude irrational at the time when her own ideological principles are still rigid and unrelated to real life; but even then she is deeply impressed and learns a lesson which eventually induces her to abandon her own immature stance, the lesson being "... daß zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit, zwischen Gesetz und Leben ein weites Feld liegt" (17).

Frieda Krüger has seen life in all its manifestations and has faced it with a sense of humour, a large heart and great common sense. The most

exciting time of her life was the fight against fascism (15) which has earned her everyone's respect as well as six medals. After the War she gave up her husband in favour of a child which was not hers (73), married a loyal colleague from the factory and took into her house the mother of the children she had come to regard as her own. The final test of moral strength comes and is passed when she admits to her family that she has made a mistake and that she has no real claim to the girls who have loved and admired her as their grandmother (74). Frieda Krüger proves strong enough to share their love and her responsibilities for them with their real grandmother, the timid, utterly unimpressive and thoroughly bourgeois Therese Borowski. The old woman is the one strong formative influence on the character of Agnes, the protagonist and narrator of the book. It is she who inspires the girl with the moral strength required to place personal uprightness above career and prestige and to accept the consequences that follow from such a decision.

Frieda Krüger's counterpart in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt is Frau Prieselank, another exponent of the great strengths of the proletariat, such as the ability to survive hardship, to remain forward-looking and spontaneous, to rely on common sense, good will and humanity. Born in 1900 into a working-class family, she lost her parents in early life, was taken in by her grandfather, a farm labourer and, later, a night-watchman, who suffered from cancer and whose job the then twelve-year-old girl tried to save by dressing up in his clothes and walking the village streets in his place when he was unfit to go out.

With no child of her own, she is only too happy to take in Sabine, just released from the borstal, and to help her find her place in society. The young girl learns, not through any wise words from her, but through her personal example, listening with fascination and wonder (246) to the old woman's life story and rewarding her by trust and love. Like Frieda Krüger, Frau Prieselank's unconditional commitment to those in need demonstrates that the ties of the soul and the mind can be stronger than any physical ties. And the youthfulness of her own attitudes - particularly on moral issues - establishes an immediate understanding and mutual trust between her and the young, while the parent generation appears remote, inflexible and lacking in life experience.

"Was hat sie eigentlich von ihrem Leben? Dabei ist sie nicht mal vierzig" (25), Sabine asks herself regarding her mother and goes on to wonder in how far her own plight might be connected with her desire to avoid following her mother's example:

Vielleicht bin ich tatsächlich eine Akte geworden,
weil ich nicht so ein Leben führen wollte ...
Mutter war so etwas wie eine lebendige
Abschreckung (25-6).

In contrast, Frau Prieselank, although her life has been beset by a number of serious difficulties, becomes to the young girl a model of strength. Sabine learns that there is a place for everyone in society, and that social standing is irrelevant to a person's worth:

Manchmal möchte ich alles hinschmeißen, ich bin schon in Rente und könnte zu Hause bleiben, hier gibt es nur Ärger, ... und dann denke ich mir, Prieselanke, die warten auf dich, du kannst hier nicht weg vom Bahnsteig, und das tröstet mich, wenn ich abends die Binden von den Beinen abwickle ... Es ist wirklich schön, daß du da bist, Sabine (55).

There are male counterparts to these strong old women whose example and company provide such encouragement to the young rebels. Strength and warmth of personality, richness of past experience, a generally youthful approach to life and people and an absence of personal career ambition are equally characteristic of the male as of the female representatives of the old generation.

In Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. we have Zaremba, a man in his seventies, both physically and mentally agile, indeed, more so than his young colleagues in the brigade. His Bohemian extraction and speech as well as his somewhat clownish behaviour (skillfully displayed when the brigade's morale needs boosting and tensions need to be relieved) provide a touch of the exotic. This is strengthened by rumours about his past life: Like Azdak in Brecht's Kreidekreis he is believed to have held (for three weeks in 1945) the post of supreme judge, dispensing justice of his own peculiar brand (94). If his ideological integrity is beyond doubt, so is his personal commitment to East German society and his keen eye for the problems of people around him. Significantly, Zaremba is the only person believed by Addi as well as by Edgar himself to have seen through the latter and to have understood him (96, 144).

Edgar Wibeau, whose main concern at the time of meeting Zaremba is to avoid being aligned, being pressured into shaping himself and his life according to adult ideas rather than his own, is delighted to find in the old man another social outsider who nevertheless demonstrates that outsiderdom is not irreconcilable with ideological loyalty and valuable services to the collective. His clownish tricks - dancing on a ladder, pulling faces, doing a take-off of the Hunchback of Notre Dame or bursting into songs such as "Brüder zur Sonne zur Freiheit" - not only suit his character but also achieve what no moral preaching could achieve. And his keen sexual activities serve but to confirm Edgar's view that here is a man who has succeeded in living a life of his own making without depriving society of its due.

Kasimierz Gerhart, in Schneider's Die Reise nach Jaroslaw, has had a similar life pattern, albeit of a much more dramatic kind and at a much more exposed social and political level: the son of a professor of law at Warsaw University and owner of a cotton factory at Lodz, he dissociated himself from his bourgeois background at the age of seventeen. Three years of roaming the world, learning foreign languages observing mankind and making a living as an odd jobber, were followed by a similar period spent as an antifascist fighter in Spain where he met Hemingway and his girlfriend. The following three years he fought for Poland's liberation from the Germans in all conceivable partisan capacities, including some time in Warsaw and in Auschwitz. After the war he became Bürgermeister in a provincial Polish town, but soon withdrew into private life, growing increasingly

fond of wood carving for which, in the course of time, he has become internationally famous. When Gitti meets him, he still lives by himself in an old farmhouse, carving wooden figures from tree roots and branches and painting them, needing nothing for his happiness except tea and cigarettes, and owning no material assets except an ancient motorcycle, a sat-through sofa and a guitar.

Gitti's fascination with Kasimierz is boundless. He immediately attracts her by his "angenehme Stimme" uttering "das allervollkommenste Oma-Hela-Deutsch" (203). The interior of his house painted "in einem tollen Blau" (203) also reminds her of her grandmother's kitchen, with its old-fashioned battered furniture and picturesque chaos:

Dort gab es ein vollständig zerbeultes Ledersofa, drei Sessel aus insgesamt sieben Jahrhunderten, viel Platz, eine Gitarre und viel buntes Zeug ... Mich beeindruckte vor allem die Gitarre, die auf dem zerbeulten Ledersofa lag und eine gewöhnliche Allerweltsgitarre war (203-4).

The description of the man himself is summed up as of someone who: "vermutlich zu den aufregendsten Leuten (gehört), mit denen ich jemals zu tun hatte" (205).

His exciting life in the service of a great cause, his personal courage displayed throughout his life, his personal acquaintance with her private hero and heroine, his renunciation of considerable personal wealth at an early age and lack of regard for fame and

wealth in his present life, his exciting stories, his guitar-playing and romantic seclusion - all this adds up to an image of immediate and total attraction to the young girl. During their stay in the farmhouse, young Jan is soon left in no doubt as to his own dispensibility, and Gitti's complete absorption with Gerhart, who himself, appears totally unaware of or uninterested in his young guests' problem. The episode ends with Gitti slipping out of the house without a parting word, but taking with her a lasting impression of what she would like to see in her own life.

While Zaremba and Kasimierz Gerhart draw authority from their heroic past, the old-age pensioner Artur Kraatz in Zwischen zwei Nächten can look back on nothing more than "sieben sinnlose Jahre" (188). Yet his mind, if not his body, has also retained youthfulness and freshness, and his hopes are for a future when the ideals he and his generation risked their lives for will be fully realized:

... in Zukunft wird auch gearbeitet, bloß nicht mehr so viel, da gibt es keine ungleichen Menschen mehr, alle sind gleich, alle sind gesund, die Leute werden nicht mehr hundert, die werden zweihundert Jahre alt, wenn das Leben bloß nicht so kurz wäre ... (188).

The old man has immense trust in man's ability to progress towards self-liberation after a long period of moral and physical oppression:

Heutzutage sind die geistig völlig ausgelastet, sind die, die kommen auf gar keine dummen Gedanken mehr, wie soll ich mal sagen, zu unserer Zeit gab's noch Prügel in der Schule und nicht knapp, die heutige Jugend ist freier ... (162).

Artur Kraatz has preserved an eye for the essential. He lives his life his own way, communicating his thoughts to his loyal fox-terrier Lohengrin, while always ready for a good-humoured and encouraging word with the young who respect and trust him (187).

The wisdom of his mumbled comment: "... Moskau ha'ck nur uff Bildern geseh'n ... wie ick euch kenne, nee ... ihr werd't det schon schaffen ... gloob ick ganz sicha ..." (187), helps them to adjust their perspective and to regain a sense of proportion in thinking over what had seemed to them an insurmountable problem.

Fifteen-year-old Reinhold Porsche, who gets little sympathy from his parents regarding his tastes and style of life, loves the old man, his colourful character and life, his oddities and eccentricities and his imaginative and creative mind:

... Reinhold mag Artur. Seine Wohnung begeistert ihn: Das Klavier mit der von Artur selbst entwickelten Dreizehntonleiter (die er Zigeunertonleiter nennt), die synchron geschalteten Plattenkamas zu zweiseitigen Porträtaufnahmen und das Bett mit den Seilen darum, da ist nicht alles so auf Kante wie zu Hause, die ist bunt und irgendwie interessant, außerdem hat Artur viel gelesen und weiß zu erzählen ... (169).

The old man's faith in man's ability to free himself for true humanity is implicitly proved right by the fact that young Reinhold's scope for self-development is infinitely greater than what his parents ever had (169).

Alongside the exotic, widely travelled and much admired old person there is the figure of the grandmother (or substitute) who in the young person's life replaces the mother who is wholly absorbed by professional obligations. For the young this tends to imply a dual experience: on the one hand, they derive happiness and a sense of security from having someone near who is not only free from time constraints and therefore always available, but also warm, imaginative and suited to meet the needs of the thoughtful, sensitive and somewhat lonely child or teenager.

On the other hand, it is only natural that the old person concerned dies before his/her young protégé reaches adulthood. This inevitably causes a deep sense of loss or even shock to the youngster and seriously affects his future development.

Yana in Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit is looked after by her grandmother from the age of two or three, as her parents are deeply involved with their work and party commitments. Yana's grandmother came from Poland, a devout Catholic who even in atheist East Germany continues to attend mass regularly and cannot understand why her children - Yana's parents - have abandoned their faith and Church: "Ihr seid doch früher immer in die Kirche gegangen", sagt sie. "War das nicht schön, wenn wir alle zum Hochamt gingen?" (19). The girl's parents' reaction to such pleas is one of irritation and open anger. Religion and beauty are not amongst their priorities in bringing up their children. Yana herself seems somewhat torn; instinctively she sympathizes with her grandmother, particularly when she is removed

from the family into a flat of her own:

Meine Großmutter wohnt nicht mehr bei uns. Sie erzählt jedem, sie sei froh, eine eigene Wohnung zu haben. Aber ich glaube, es ist nicht wahr. Wenn ich zu ihr komme, weint sie. Einmal ging ich mit ihr in die Kirche, nur weil ich merkte, sie war ganz glücklich darüber (19-20).

Yet, when she tries to be rational, she convinces herself of the rightness of her parents' attitudes and actions, half managing to conceal from herself the fact that the occasional bottle of brandy her father takes to his mother is unlikely to help the old woman to come to terms with her sense of isolation and grief:

Vielleicht denkt er auch, was kann die alte Frau dafür. Sie hat siebzig Jahre an den lieben Gott geglaubt, da kommt es auf die paar Jahre auch nicht mehr an. Sie versteht's nicht anders, und sie tut ihm leid. Er gibt ihr rumänischen Weinbrand, den trinkt sie ganz gern (19).

In Schneider's Die Reise nach Jarosław three chapters are devoted to "Oma Hela", another grandmother brought in from Poland to look after a young child whose parents' lives centre around their respective professional obligations. Oma Hela is an indispensable presence to young Gitti and her death comes as a severe shock. Oma Hela's realm in the family's old flat is the kitchen and particularly the old sofa in it, a haven of peace, comfort and security:

In der Küche stand ein altes Sofa. In dem Sofa waren ein paar Federn kaputt. Wenn ich mich auf das Sofa setzte, knackten die kaputten Federn. Außer mir setzte sich niemand auf das Sofa, höchstens noch Oma Hela (13).

This sofa (reminiscent of Edgar Wibeau's garden-shed) is essentially a thing of the past, a symbol of the world Gitti's parents are keen to leave behind in favour of one where order, hygiene and rationalization hold sway: the sofa is disposed of immediately the old woman has died, and the three remaining members of the family move into an impersonal modern flat: "in einem von den neuen Klötzen mit den hellgelben Pinkelbudenkacheln" (21). Gitti puts up no defence, partly because she feels weakened by illness, partly because she can see that her grandmother's world is doomed to die:

Ich hätte protestieren können, obwohl ich krank war, aber ich sah ein, daß Oma Helas Sofa aus Jarosław in die Küche an der Schönhauser gehörte und genau dorthin und also in der scheißneuen Wohnung an der Mollstraße nichts zu suchen hatte (21).

Oma Hela is described as an unmistakable individual, quite unsuited to fit into the orderly world created by the generation of Gitti's parents, the then forty-year-olds. She is of striking physical appearance (which Gitti sincerely hopes is her own as well):

Wenn die Greisin [her mother] heute behauptet, sie hätte früher ausgesehen, wie ich inzwischen aussehe, was ich für eine glatte Lüge halte, so behauptete ich dagegen, daß ich aussehe wie Oma Hela ausgesehen hat, ganz früher und ganz zuletzt (12).

Short, skinny, lively, with black eyes and ginger (undyed) hair, and (her own) shiny teeth, Oma Hela cooks exotic Polish dishes for herself and her granddaughter, fascinates her by tales about life in Jarosław and Galicia, sings Catholic hymns with a loud and rasping voice and speaks with an accent that makes Gitti go into raptures:

Das war nicht Sprache, das war Musik. Das war nicht Musik, das war großer Auftritt. So wie wenn der berühmte Rocksänger Jimi [sic] Hendrix seine Gitarre röhren läßt in seinen größten Momenten ... (12).

Parsimonious as regards her own person, Oma Hela can be extremely generous towards others (14). She is skilful with her hands, conversant with all things in nature, and capable of coping with the most extraordinary incidents of everyday life. Immensely superstitious as well as determined to lead her life her own way, she refuses, on her deathbed at sixty-nine, to take any chemical products. Instead she composes her own herbal mixtures and - an act of protest and rebellion - starts smoking like a chimney.

All in all, an ideal companion and model for a young, imaginative and sensitive child and teenager. Oma Hela's death inevitably is a great shock to Gitti, "mein erster Kneks" (19), the first of a whole series which finally drives her to break away from her old life and to go on a pilgrimage to Oma Hela's world.

At first, her hopes appear to be fulfilled when, in the streets of Słubice, an old woman strongly resembling Oma Hela winks at her, which Gitti takes to be a good omen:

Sie hatte helle Augen und nicht mehr besonders viele Zähne im Mund. Sie erinnerte mich trotzdem irgendwie an Oma Hela. Während ich dastand und sie ansah, drehte sie allmählich ihr Gesicht aus der Sonne, hin zu mir, und dabei kniff sie das rechte Auge auf ulkige Art zusammen. Ich fand das fabelhaft. Ich hätte plötzlich in die Luft springen können (80).

Gitti feels convinced that she is on the right track: "Ich fragte mich bloß, warum ich nicht längst schon dort war" (80).

In Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt, the girl Sabine lives through a very similar experience. Although her mother has no job and is always at home, Sabine prefers staying with her grandmother and her old uncle Karl while her estrangement from her parents grows from year to year. Sabine's mother witnesses this development with regret and a degree of understanding alien to her husband:

... Oma verwöhnte sie, Oma und der alte Onkel Karl, der auf dem Berg lebte, verstanden sie vielleicht besser als wir. Sie lasen Märchen, und Sabine las Oma auch die Geschichten aus den bunten Zeitschriften vor, die ihre Tochter Friedel aus Pirmasens schickte, Sabine verstand die Geschichten gar nicht, aber Oma mochte sie, zum Beispiel "Wie die Liebe den Krebs besiegen kann" oder "Majestät ganz privat, der Tee mit der Königin". Sabine las dafür die Bildergeschichten aus den Zeitschriften und schrieb sie sogar weiter, Tarzan rettet die weiße Frau und so etwas (64).

The common ground between the old people and the young girl is their naive, unbiased, imaginative approach to the world and all it has to offer, their ability to dream, to have ideals, and to preserve in their own lives an element of the mysterious, the irrational against all outward pressure to be rational and efficient and to comply with a generally accepted pattern of behaviour and thought.

It is her grandmother and uncle who offer security and love to Sabine when she has finally fallen out with her parents who humiliate her by suspicion and contempt. Not surprisingly, her grandmother's death and funeral: "Oma tot, dieser Sarg, diese vielen Blumen und Kränze, diese Menschen in schwarzer Kleidung und ich mit Vater und Mutter" (315), fill her with a strong sense of loss, the loss of

eine besondere Klasse-Oma, die mich verstand, die alles für mich gemacht hatte. Und das gegen ihren eigenen Sohn. Gegen meinen Vater hat sie mich verteidigt. Sie und Onkel Karl waren meine besten, meinen [sic] liebsten Verbündeten (315).

Sabine's Onkel Karl (190-194) - who had been united with her grandmother through a life-long romantic love - is an Altkommunist, who suffered for his loyalty to the Party in a Nazi concentration camp and mental institution, yet all he wanted was peace and happiness: a rearer of pigeons, shoe-maker, truth-teller, on intimate terms with all things and creatures in nature, who spends his last hours reminiscing and playing his mouth organ before departing, without bitterness or regret: "von seinem großen, kleinen, bunten schönen Leben (194).

Her Onkel Karl's death, apart from causing her sadness and grief, also confronts Sabine with the need to take a fundamental and far-reaching decision regarding her own future life. For he leaves her his house and garden in the country. These would offer Sabine sufficient material security to allow her to withdraw from society, from the city and her work in the factory, in short, from all the problems she faces in her new life after having been released from borstal. Charming though the prospect may seem to her initially, she soon realizes that she has no right and no real desire to opt out of life and withdraw into the idyllic seclusion of her uncle's cottage: what may have been right and appropriate for the old man - victim of the old society - is no longer right and appropriate for her who is fortunate enough to grow up into a better and ^{more} just world.

II

The contrasting forms of relationships the young have with the two generations preceding them - those of their parents and grandparents - is mirrored within the wider context of their relationships with their environment as a whole, relationships which are characterized by civilization fatigue and nostalgia for the past. Civilization fatigue takes the form of a dislike, even a contempt for what the middle generation regard as their prime achievements: material well-being, modern housing, hygienic living conditions, adequate clothing, private means of transport, relaxation and holiday facilities for all - all of them assets which the young would happily dispense with in order to regain

something of the individual, original, colourful, rich and (to them) exotic qualities so closely associated by them with 'the olden days' and observed to be rapidly disappearing. Their fancy is caught by the old 'Mietskaserne', and its colourful, albeit not entirely hygienic living conditions, by a life that is simple though rough, where people move about on foot, live from hand to mouth, and work only when impelled by desire or need. Interestingly, these same young people are heavily dependent on other, even more modern, facilities, such as the cassette recorder, Western-style jeans, etc., which, far from stimulating the expression of individual tastes, are liable to level out most differences between individuals and make for a highly uniform social group - the 'modern teenager'. An equally revealing fact is, of course, that they never attempt to understand that, what to them appears to be original and exotic about the old, was by no means that at the time when the old were young and the exotic was the norm.

Nostalgia for the past is intimately linked with ~~empathy~~ for the social outsider, the underdog, the young and weak (human or animal) - thus reflecting these young people's own sense of insecurity in a society where the individual's value is measured exclusively by material and social achievement. They long to return to a world stripped of the complexities of a highly industrialized and competitive society and offering the opportunity for personal development and expression. Holden Caulfield's unsolved problem of what happens to the ducks on the pond in Central Park in winter acquires a leitmotif function in this context.

Nostalgia for the disappearing world of the old tenement houses in Moscow, set against the rational awareness that the old is no longer in keeping with an age determined to conquer the universe, dominates Akšenov's novel A Starry Ticket. His novel starts with a lovingly detailed sketch of "Barcelona House" and its inhabitants and their back-yard idyll from which young Dimka takes flight. It concludes with "Barcelona House" half demolished and waiting for the bull-dozers to complete their work:

I got out at our old metro station. Everything was the same as before. The same sort of young fellows about. The same huddle round the stalls. And there, at last, were the ruins of the old house! It was already half demolished, with a high fence round it. Inside was a bulldozer, on a pile of broken brick, the moon glinting on the caterpillar tracks. There was a notice on the fence: Works by SMY No 40 (223).

The existence of young Dimitri in the old city of Moscow of the fifties is closely matched by that of Paul (in Plenzdorf's Legende vom Glück ohne Ende) in the city of Berlin of the seventies. The gradual replacement of the old by the new - unresisted but perceived as fatal for the individual - provides the overall framework for the story of Paul's loves and narrow escape. "Hier haben sie gewohnt" (7), the novel begins, and the old narrator immediately enters into a detailed description of the lost world of the Singer Straße in the district of Friedrichshain, where people lived in a harmonious and self-efficient community, with no outside interference:

Da war Schuberts großer Lampenladen, vis-à-vis Neumanns Kneipe, dann kam Bäcker Hellweg, Schuster Lehmann und der Glaser. ... Dann hatten wir noch eine Molkerei, da gab es nach dem Krieg noch Kühe auf dem Hof und ein Eiswerk, das von Lau. Der hat noch bis vor vier Jahren Eis mit seinen Gäulen ausgefahren, für unsere Eiskästen. Auf der Singerstraße hatten wir alles. Auch ein Kino (7).

The story of Paul's love, divided into two parts - the Paula and the Laura parts - is also the story of his social and physical environment, the Paula part being inseparable from the old community in the Singer Straße, while the second, the Laura part, is inextricably tied up with his modern three-room flat on the nineteenth floor of a newly built block of flats in another part of the city.

Paula's death immediately precedes the demolition of the old Singer Straße (178) where she spent the brief period of happiness granted her and during which Paul's individuality developed. His move into the "Scheibe Süd" is directly followed by the appearance of Paulalaura, whose systematic campaign to reduce Paul's character, appearance and life-style to those of his pre-Paula days is accompanied by a similarly systematic campaign to do away with everything old and reminiscent of Paula's regime: the old furniture is replaced by new modern and characterless items (which immediately begin to disintegrate (195ff.)), the children's and Paul's old clothes are replaced by new and fashionable ones (204) and their habits generally moulded to fit a rigorously orderly pattern (228).

Paul's escape and survival as an individual are closely associated with one relic of the Paula world: the garage which miraculously survives the general demolition, which he had used to store the objects discarded by Laura (203) and which later serves him as a refuge (249). The garage ultimately disappears along with himself and his car (319). In contrast to Akšenov's novel and in keeping with the overall intention of Plenzdorf's works, the demolition of the old world is not ultimately seen as a necessary, albeit a regrettable, milestone on the road of progress, but represents a significant step towards the ultimate destruction of individuality and personal happiness in favour of social alignment and uniformity. There is sufficient irony and even sarcasm in Paul's perception of life in the block of flats in an artificially created environment, utterly inadequate to cater for the needs of human beings, to exclude the option of a "positive" interpretation along the lines of that applicable to A Starry Ticket.

Plenzdorf's earlier work, Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., though less explicit in its treatment of this theme, is equally unambiguous: the demolition of the cottages, on the Berlin allotment, the one place where Edgar Wibeau is free to live his life as he feels he must, is as much of a serious loss to the individual as is the demolition of the Singer Straße.

A strong sense of affinity with and desire to care for the defenceless and the weak characterizes the young man Klaus in Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an. He is said by his girl-friend to be talking about

old houses "wie von alten Menschen" (35), i.e. lovingly and sympathetically. On one occasion he mounted a rescue operation for snails which had strayed from his front-garden on to the road and were facing certain death (56). He thinks about old age and death in general (46), and, as his room overlooks an old people's home: "so ein vorgefertigter zweistöckiger Flachbau inmitten von zwölfgeschossigen Betonriesen"(48), he has set about designing a new one in the midst of a friendly, caring and sociable environment where a sense of isolation cannot arise in the old:

Aus einem Riesenstapel Zeichnungen kramte Klaus ein paar Skizzen, auf denen er seine Vorstellungen vom Zusammenleben festgehalten hatte. Da stand das Altersheim neben dem Kindergarten und der Schule. Und es gab Bäume und schattige Ecken mit Bänken und Spielplätzen. Alle Bauten waren miteinander verbunden. Wer in seinem Altersheim lebte, würde nie das Gefühl haben, abgeschoben und isoliert worden zu sein (48).

Sabine in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt feels immediately at home in Frau Prieselank's flat with its old-fashioned but characterful appearance, a reflection of the old woman's warmth and generosity and delight in small pleasures. Sabine is immediately reminded of her beloved Oma's flat (24). On one occasion, Sabine regales a tipsy company by declaring her love of "eingelegte Heringe und alte Leute, alte Häuser und Kinder" (292), and contemptuously contrasting them with the world of the materially successful: "Ihr mit euren Autos, Konferenzen, euren Reden, Krankheiten, euren Bungalows, Motorbooten" (293).

The most self-indulgent and elaborate display of nostalgia for the old, the quaint, the disorganized and the naturally grown is found in Schneider's Die Reise nach Jaroslaw. For Gitti, her grandmother and old kitchen couch stand for happiness, security and warmth and all that resists routine and uniformity. Throughout the novel, anything that is old, idiosyncratic or delapidated immediately takes her fancy. There is the old shoemaker's shop, ready for demolition, where Carlos lives with his friends: It appears to her a place offering simple joys and perfect harmony, until these are undermined by Carlos's return to Bolivia where he will become an integrated member of the well-to-do and the powerful:

Der Laden war früher ein Schusterladen gewesen. Der Name des Schusters stand noch über dem Laden und die Tatsache, daß er Schuster war. Das Schild mit den Buchstaben war unheimlich verwittert. Der Laden war baufällig, und das ganze Haus, in dem sich der Laden befand, war baufällig. Das Haus sollte irgendwann abgerissen werden, und dafür sollte ein neuer Kasten hingestellt werden, vermutlich mindestens acht Stockwerke und gelbe Kacheln, wie der Kasten, in dem meine Greise hausten (38).

The young inhabitants have replaced all doors by curtains; their lives are spent reading, listening to the wireless and drinking. Gitti admires them especially for being "fabelhaft arm": "Die Art, wie sie lebten, war auf eine ganz umwerfende Art cool" (38).

At the very beginning of her Odyssey she rescues the unhappy Herr Bellmann from the clutches of the railway police and takes him home to his flat in the Ackerstraße. Her heart leaps up when she gets there; the Ackerstraße is "eine Art unterernährte Schwester der Schönhauser Allee" (54)

where she herself grew up in the loving care of her "Oma Hela":

Die Häuser in der Ackerstraße riechen ganz unbeschreiblich alt und verbraucht und nach Bier. Sie haben himmlische Treppenhäuser. Sie haben Ausgüsse auf dem Flur. Sie haben Fenster, die nicht viel größer sind als die Löcher in normalen Taubenschlägen (54).

Preceding her final departure from Berlin, Gitti undertakes a sentimental journey to both the old house in the Schönhauser and the new house in the Mollstraße. While the former immediately moves her:

"Der Hausflur roch fast genau so, wie ich ihn in Erinnerung hatte. Ich fühlte mich sofort ergriffen" (72), the latter leaves her utterly cold:

In mir regte sich überhaupt nichts.

Ich ging immerhin in den Hausflur. Ich ging bis zum Lift ... Ich blickte die Treppen hoch. Die Treppen waren eng und verwinkelt und hatten dürre Eisengeländer an den Seiten. Irgendwie erinnerte mich der Anblick an Knast ... (72).

Gitti experiences a similar contrast in Frankfurt where she and Jan are looking for something to eat and a night's accommodation. It is Jan who pressures her into entering the posh hotel "Stadt Frankfurt":

Es war einer von den Schuppen, in denen ich regelmäßig sauer werde. Der Schuppen war teuer, und alle, die sich darin bewegten, taten das mit dem deutlichen Ausdruck, daß sie wußten, wie teuer es ist (85).

Mercifully, the receptionist declares the hotel to be full up, and the two young people end up in a second-class hotel on the outskirts of S~~x~~ubice:

Die Wirtin war ziemlich umgänglich und zeigte uns die Zimmer. Meins hatte ein Bett mit violetter Steppdecke und eine Lampe mit Glastroddeln, und außerdem waren zwei Wände schräg, weil das Zimmer unter dem Dach lag. Ich brauchte bloß kurz an Stadt Frankfurt zu denken, um zu finden, daß das Zimmer himmlisch war (95).

Hitch-hiking is seen by the young as a form of transport ideally suited to their desire to avoid conforming with the norm. It offers a combination of simple living, modern transport, and a touch of adventure. Both Gitti in Die Reise nach Jaros~~l~~aw and Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi prefer it as a way of getting about.

While still following Jan in his pursuit of Gothic churches on the Baltic coast, Gitti praises the joys of walking on foot, in spite of heat and insects:

Trotzdem, sagte ich, es ist Klasse. Kein Mensch zu Fuß unterwegs außer uns. Sitzen alle bloß höchstens in ihren Blechkästen und machen Umweltverschmutzung. Kein Mensch weiß, wo wir sind, und sucht uns hier. Und Bäume. Und Sonne (104-5).

However, she soon hitches a lift for the two of them, a form of transport which then becomes the rule for them. When, on a lonely country road in Poland, Gitti feels tired and gets blisters on her feet, her enthusiasm for walking continues to wane:

Es ist natürlich Klasse, sagte ich, daß bei euch so wenig Autos fahren, wegen der Umweltverschmutzung, aber irgendwie hätte ich nichts dagegen, wenn ich jetzt beispielsweise bloß auf einem Traktor säße (151).

Jan takes offence at this, as he senses it to be a slight on his country's poverty, whereupon Gitti feels called upon to declare her love of just that quality: "Ich finde Nicht-reich-Sein duftete" (151). She is generally inclined to express contempt for people driving about in big cars, described by her as "ungeheuer glitzernde Schlitten" (64), while she is fascinated by Kasimierz Gerhart's motorbike, especially on finding out that he is, in fact, a very rich man (213). Her only other contact with a wealthy person, the American, owner of the "voll-klimatisierter Plymouth", on his way to Legnica, fills her with the conviction that money and the public display of it have no attraction for her:

Millionäre sind mir ungeheuer egal, und das einzig Peinliche war, daß ich jetzt mit einem von ihnen in einem vollklimatisierten Plymouth saß ... (160).

But she is moved by the man's sadness and his longing to share it with others (165).

Hitch-hiking is the only form of transport conceivable for Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi, particularly as the whole idea of a trip to Rumania is sparked off in the first place by a sense of horror at the possibility of having to join his girl-friend on a summer holiday at the seaside. While she is dreaming of a lazy life of luxury:

Ich hab keine Lust, nur mit Hose, Pullover und Regenpelle loszuziehen, ich möchte mit zwei Koffern fahren und mich dreimal am Tag umziehen. Im Sand liegen und an nichts denken. Eis essen, Musik hören, tanzen, nichts tun, mich erholen, genießen, eben stinkfaul sein! (9),

Norman hankers after being on the move, an independent, adventurous, active and simple life:

Ich möchte trampen, sagte ich.

Wohin denn? fragte sie.

Weiß nicht, sagte ich. Irgendwohin, ganz egal. Keinen Tag am gleichen Ort! Jeden Tag was Neues sehen. Am Morgen nicht wissen, wo man am Abend schläft. Immer in Bewegung. Selbst bestimmen, wo und wie lange man bleibt, was und wann man ißt, sein eigener Herr sein! Am Abend wissen, warum man müde ist. Eindrücke sammeln und einwecken! Sich nicht hängenlassen, sondern was tun! (8).

When the police strictly refuse to issue a visa for a hitch-hiking trip, it takes all his talents of simulation to rescue his plan.

III

The old - people, houses, objects -, whether strong and supportive or weak and in need of support, have been seen to attract unlimited admiration and sympathy from those young people who fail to fit into the social mould. Nostalgia for the past is but the other side of the same coin, a past which appears to the young to have displayed precisely those qualities which they feel are missing in their own modern world: colour,

spontaneity, a touch of the primitive, excitement, adventure and the absence of tight organization and control.

2.4.4 Attributes of the young rebel

I

The young rebels in the texts under consideration display the attributes typically associated with the sub-culture of the young, in terms of (usually self-chosen) names, outer appearances (hair and clothes) and musical tastes and accessories. Judged by today's Western standards, they appear extremely moderate and hardly exciting in character, but put into perspective and seen within the context of East German society and its expression in literature in the pre-Honecker era, they are distinctly novel, as they represent the first confirmation through literature that the international sub-culture of the young had not by-passed that society.

II

The young persons' search for individuality in the face of powerful social pressure to conform finds expression in a pronounced pride in a name which distinguishes him from others, whether this name is in fact their real one or one which they have adopted for themselves. Thus Edgar Wibeau is furious at hearing his last name persistently mispronounced as 'Wib^ebau' rather than 'Wibeau' (his mother, a thoroughly 'aligned' adult, regards this with complete indifference). It is obvious that in his name, which has a foreign and Western ring, Edgar finds confirmed his sense of being different from others, of

being just and unmistakably himself:

Wie das klingt: Edgar Wiebau! - Aber Edgar Wibeau!
Kein Aas sagt ja auch Nivau statt Niveau. Ich meine,
jeder Mensch hat schließlich das Recht, mit seinem
richtigen Namen richtig angeredet zu werden. Wenn
einer keinen Wert darauf legt - seine Sache. Aber
ich lege nun mal Wert darauf (14).

Similarly, Edgar's female counterpart in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw, Gitti (Brigitte), attributes great importance to her family name, Marczinkowski, although, as she stresses, contrary to general expectation, her Polish name is, in fact, that of her father's family in Saxony, while it is her mother, with the German maiden name of Schroeter, whose family have come from Poland, the country in which she is trying to find refuge from ugly reality (11). Although she seems to have no objections to being called by an abbreviated form of her Christian name - "Gitti" rather than "Brigitte" -, she expresses profound displeasure at being told by Edgar Wibeau (whom she happens to meet at Friedrichstraße station) that his name is "Ed", upon which she comments: "Hier muß ich einfügen, daß mich bestimmte einsilbige Abkürzungen immer leicht nervös machen" (49). But she generously concedes: "Daß ich am Ende doch nicht mit ihm kam, lag aber keineswegs an seinem affigen Namen" (49). (What really arouses her anger is his exaggerated love of beat music).

Then there are those who are unfortunate enough to be the bearers of very common names and whose desire to be different finds an outlet in their choice of nicknames for themselves. In Heiduczek's Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit we find 'Hans-Peter' being shed in

favour of 'Tolja' (161) and 'Christiane' in favour of 'Yana' (6), two names with an exotic (Russian) flavour:

... ich bin ein ganz anderer Mensch, seit ich 'Yana' heiße ... es gehört einfach dazu, daß man den richtigen Namen hat. Man fühlt sich anders. Vielleicht wächst man aus seinen Namen heraus, wie man aus seinen Kleidern herauswächst (6).

In Kruschel's Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt it is young Herbert Müller who is dissatisfied with his ordinary sounding name and adopts the American film-style pseudonym 'Jimmy'. The tone of irony in the author's comment is unmistakable:

Herbert, alias Jimmy mit dem guten deutschen Nachnamen Müller wird sich auf eine Bastmatte strecken, das Tonbandgerät anwerfen, zwei bis sechs Biere picheln und allein vor sich hin drusseln ... (46).

The good-for-nothing charmer Lars Berg in eintreffe heute declares the name 'Agnes' to be fit only for "alte Frauen und Heilige" (143) and decides to replace it by 'Sally'.

Petra, in Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an, is conscious of the fact that her Christian name sets her apart from other youngsters (6), although in her case the pride in being different is muted by her desire to be like other children, with brothers, sisters, father and mother and an ordinary name:

Meine Eltern wollten ein Kind. Dieses Kind meiner Eltern bin ich. Sie nannten mich Petra, und nun drehte sich die halbe Welt um, wenn ich gerufen wurde (5).

Finally, another variant of the name motif comes in Plenzdorf's Legende vom Glück ohne Ende, where the elective affinity of the two lovers finds expression in the near-identity and final merger of their names: 'Paul' and 'Paula' become 'PaulundPaula', citizens of a Utopian society.

III

A hair-style which offends against social convention is an obvious way of expressing one's desire to dissociate oneself from society at large. It is a device applied liberally in 'Jeans Prosa' books. For a male rebel this entails sporting excessively long or short hair. (Dimka in A Starry Ticket wears "a French crew-cut style", 7), while girls are restricted to having long hair cut short. It is interesting to observe how, within a period of ten years, this expression of rebelliousness steadily loses in significance as social conventions lose in rigidity.

In the earliest of the texts analyzed here, Das Jahr und Katrin (published as late as 1972 but set in the early sixties and doubtlessly written during that decade), long hair on a boy is still interpreted (by the individual concerned as well as by his environment) as an unambiguous affront against society. Michael uses his long hair (and, later, his

bald head) as a means to attract attention to his own personality rather than his public image (43), with the result that he is suspended from school for a year.

In the same book, a young girl, Brigitte, secretary to the principal whom Michael is about to ask for his readmission, evinces a change of values when she asks Michael to help her cut off her long plaited hair. Significantly, she is prompted to do so by Michael's flirtatious observation: "'... wenn du auf deinen Zopf verzichten würdest, könnte ich mich sogar glatt in dich verlieben. Aber so ...'", which she rightly interprets as having a metaphorical as well as a purely literal meaning: "'Hast du was gegen Zöpfe?" "Ja", sagte er, "in jeder Form"' (188-9). He suggests to her cutting her hair to shoulder length so as to leave enough for two little plaited pigtails rather than one long severe-looking one:

Er schloß die Tür und trat zu ihr hin und spielte mit zwei Fingern Schere. "Hier so, und da was, und da auch was, einfach alles bis zur Schulter."

"Wie Katrin?"

"Ja", sagte er, "wie Katrin." (189)

Katrin, who has completed the emancipatory and maturation process Michael and Brigitte are still going through, becomes their model.

Reinhold Porsche, the fifteen-year-old boy in Walther's Zwischen zwei Nächten (a novel published in the same first year of Honecker's régime), is patently no longer the victim of such rigorous regulations regarding external appearance. Nor is his long hair meant as a serious

provocation. It is true, people do call him "Gammer", his parents regard him with worried looks and his class mates never fail to remind him weekly to go to a barber's - but the overall tone of the novel and, in particular, the very understanding comments made on Reinhold's hair by the young couple Christa and Alexander leave no doubt that the boy's idiosyncratic appearance is to be seen by us as a boyish form of self-expression of no serious consequence and as merely replacing other idiosyncrasies of earlier generations:

Ziemlich lang [seine Haare], seine Eltern sehen das mit Unbehagen, Gammler, sagen die Leute, und in der Schule wird ihm wöchentlich der Friseur empfohlen. Christa und Alexander erinnern eigene modische Merkwürdigkeiten, er seine Glatze mit sechzehn (die Wette belief sich auf 20 Mark), sie ihre tausend Petticoats unter den hochwippenden Röcken, beides Anlaß zu ernststen Zweifeln von Seiten der Erwachsenen, manche stellten sogar ihre positive Stellung zu Staat und Regierung in Frage (194).

Here we have a clear indication that opposition, confrontation between the young and the older generation can be avoided through mediation by those who, like Christa and Alexander, are close in age and attitude to both.

In Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., a good three pages are devoted to the issue of long hair. Edgar, on arriving in Berlin, promptly makes up his mind to let his hair grow long in order to avoid being shown up as a 'Musterknabe' from the provinces:

Anfangs war mein Problem in der "Großen Melodie" bloß, daß ich keine langen Haare hatte. Ich fiel ungeheuer aus dem Rahmen. Als echter Vorbildknabe durfte ich in Mittenberg natürlich keine Kanten haben und eine

Innenrolle schon gar nicht. Ich weiß nicht, ob sich einer vorstellen kann, was das für ein Leiden war (61).

For a while he contemplates the possibility of emulating the idea (he has read about somewhere) of simply wearing a wig for his appearances in public. But not only is a wig hard to come by, he also knows that his own hair will grow fast enough as he prides himself of a "geradezu teuflischen Haarwuchs" (63). Thus the problem solves itself, and after only two weeks he can sport "einen annehmbaren Pilz" (63). Revealingly, while elaborating on his problem of how to come by long hair quickly to satisfy his need to belong (i.e. to all those other youngsters who frequent beat cellars such as "Große Melodie"), he also assures us that long hair as such means nothing to him and he merely uses it to test his courage in opposing public standards of social behaviour: "Ansonsten behaupte ich, daß mir lange Haare nichts sein konnten, wenn alle welche hatten, weil da kein Mut zu gehörte"(61). However, in his particular society and particular time, long hair on males is still offensive enough to the general public to make wearing it a challenge to youngsters like Edgar (62).

Gitti's (Die Reise nach Jaroslaw) attitude to hair-styles and their significance is not without ambiguity. On her eighteenth birthday, the first day of freedom, she performs two symbolic actions: Firstly, she has an elaborate warm bath, cleansing herself from "einer Art von schmieriger Kruste" (70), and discovering her own body: "Ich fand, daß ich, wie ich da so lag, eigentlich ganz gut gewachsen war" (70). Secondly, she continues straight to a hairdresser's where, to the horror

of the girl serving her, she asks to have her long hair cut off "bis auf ungefähr vier Zentimeter" (70). After this operation she finds herself "fabelhaft anders" and secretly hopes to resemble "Robert Jordans Kaninchen", the heroine in her favourite novel, Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls. An act, therefore, demonstrating a curious mixture of youthful rebelliousness and initiation rite.

There is a certain ambiguity also in Gitti's comment on Edgar Wibeau's hair style: "Der Typ trug keine besonders langen Haare" (48). It obviously implies that she would have expected very long hair, which, in keeping with her generally disparaging tone towards Edgar, one might interpret as an indication of disapproval. Yet she makes an identical comment as regards the young Pole Jan whom she immediately selects as her travelling companion (82). Thus there is the temptation simply to regard both observations as somewhat gratuitous.

One of the forms of self-expression of the "family failure" Klaus in Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an (1977) was wearing his hair long until his father (with his mother's approval) cut it off during his son's sleep. However, following a resolution of the Politbureau about young people which included a concession as regards hair-style, Klaus's father, who is a law-abiding citizen, promptly tells his son that from now on he is entitled to wear his hair long: "... nach dem Beschluß kannst du dir jetzt deinen Kanten stehenlassen" (37).

Understandably, the attraction of long hair wanes with its legalization, and Klaus resorts to having his head shaved bald, a "Yul-Brunner [sic]-

Schnitt", with the result that his father ceases to talk to him⁸⁵.

On telling his girl-friend about this incident, Klaus goes on to reminisce about a fellow pupil of his who, on being threatened with having his hair cut off by force and being expelled from school went to the police and actually enlisted their help:

Und die sind tatsächlich mit ihm in die Schule zum Direktor und haben gesagt: Also, Leute, so geht das nicht. Danach hatte der Luft. So hätte ich es machen sollen. Mein Alter wäre nicht wieder geworden, wenn die Staatssicherheit bei ihm im Büro aufgekreuzt wäre (37).

It is revealing to compare this passage with the corresponding one in Gerisch's Das Jahr und Katrin.

Long hair is sported by Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi. At work nobody appears to take offence at this, but on having to face the authorities in order to come by an exit visa, he is careful to flatten his hair down with water and hide it behind his ears, giving himself the appearance of a "Konfirmand auf vergilbten Fotos" (21). Long hair, by 1975, has obviously become just a mild irritant rather than being offensive to society at large.

Long hair is part of the standard attributes of the youngsters on motor-bikes which deeply upset the town population in eintreffen heute (148).

IV

Hair-style, as a hallmark of youth subculture, is rivalled in popularity only by clothes⁸⁶, with jeans being far and away the most commonly displayed and most treasured item of international youth uniform. An invention of the capitalist West, they are intended to signify opposition to conventional adult socialist society. As Edgar tells us, they still need to be imported from the West if they are to be "the real thing" (26). "Jeans sind eine Einstellung und keine Hosen" (26) he declares - a saying which may, one suspects, well survive as a 'geflügeltes Wort' in the German language.

Interestingly, jeans are not mentioned in those of the texts that are primarily indebted to the sixties. Tolja in Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit expresses his disenchantment with adult society through wearing not jeans but large Western-style sun-glasses (23ff.), and Yana soon follows his example (64). Had he been a little younger and a student in the seventies, he would doubtlessly have been depicted as sporting jeans. Another work which is firmly rooted in the sixties, Gerisch's Das Jahr und Katrin, never mentions jeans either. Michael, although trying hard to provoke society, does not go so far as to wear a product so blatantly Western in origin.

With Honecker's official lifting of 'taboos' relating to 'non-antagonistic' issues, jeans, like long hair on men and Western-style music, cease to represent a serious ideological provocation, but they remain an effective indicator as to the social stratum their wearer wishes to be associated

with - as lovingly and amusingly described by Edgar Wibeau in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. (26-30, 104-106). Gitti in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw would have found it impossible to leave home without her beloved "blaßrosa Levi's" and her "hellgelbe Clarks" (45). Her falling in love with the young Latin American Carlos is not unconnected with the fact that he sports "total ausgebleichte Jeans" (35), just as 'Ed' Wibeau attracts her attention at Friedrichstraße Station by his "erstklassige Bluejeans" (48). By 1974, Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi feels that the "Anti-Kitzel" previously derived from jeans will now have to come from some item of clothing less generally accepted than jeans. On preparing for his hitch-hiking trip to Rumania he cuts off the legs of his "alte Levis" an inch below the gusset:

... weil die, seit es sie überall zu kaufen gab und folglich der Reiz des Verbotenen fehlte, sowieso kein Mensch mehr anzog, jedenfalls nicht mehr mit dem kleinen Anti-Kitzel ... (18).

Jeans by then have become everyone's ordinary working-day uniform (19). Nevertheless, they continue to be mentioned as the most popular form of dress amongst the young even in the latter part of the seventies: Sabine in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt (1976) still expresses deep attachment to her "abgewetzte Jeans" (25).

Jeans are complemented by jackets and shirts of a more or less exotic nature, a trend once again set (in the context of literature) by Edgar Wibeau who proudly sports a home-made hessian jacket held together by copper wire (26); Jimmy in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt goes in

for an Afghan coat (3); Klaus in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an, feels most at ease in an "olles Batikhemd" (29); and the gang of young motorcyclists in eintreffe heute wear a uniform made up of leather jackets and jeans (148).

V

Cassette recorders, discos, and various types of Western dancing music (beat, jazz, dixieland) are an integral part of the East German youth scene of the seventies. As regards most spheres of Western fashion influence, we observe a waning of the degree of opposition associated with them by the East German authorities, the general public and consequently the young themselves⁸⁷. What has remained and, possibly, grown is young people's total identification with certain types of Western-style music, much to the chagrin of the adult world. Young Reinhold Porsche in Zwischen zwei Nächten, an ordinary teenager with no particular desire to offend but keen on self-expression through music, causes his parents displeasure by turning up the radio when Western pop songs can be heard. Yet what they object to is not so much the fact that "diese gräßliche Schlagermusik" (168) comes from a capitalist country but that their offspring requires such a sound volume and seems to be neglecting his school work. The reader is not left unaware of their blindness to the powers of discernment on Reinhold's part which allow him to distinguish between levels of quality within the field of Western pop. During a maths test he listens to the booming noises emanating from a cassette recorder (coupled with two transistor

radios) placed outside his class-room in the school playground:

Vom Fenster dringen Musikfetzen: I need you Baby believe me Babe ... Seit Reinhold Porsche Englisch lernt, erscheinen ihm diese Texte zunehmend blöder. Mit Ausnahmen: All we are saying is, give peace a chance. Von Lennon mit der Plastic-Ono-Band. Das zu wissen ist wichtig. Nicht in der Schule. Nach der Schule. Wer sowas nicht weiß ist komisch (139).

Edgar Wibeau cannot conceive of a life without music - "echte Musik" that is (26), "nicht irgendeinen Händelssohn Bacholdy"; it means more to him than almost anything else, apart from jeans and possibly sex. He is convinced that jazz will never die (30), describes himself, with gentle self-irony, as "der große Rhythmiker, gleich groß in Beat und Soul" (60) and spends his first weeks in Berlin "wie in einem Strom von Musik" in the "Große Melodie", his favourite haunt, "eine Art Paradies für mich, ein Himmel" (61). It is the heaven to which he would love to introduce those whom in a vision of one flash second, he sees as providing the secure, yet liberating family background he has never had: On entering his father's flat under the pretext of being the plumber sent to mend a leaking radiator, he immediately takes to his father - "Er sah aus wie dreißig oder so ... im Bademantel und in nagel-neuen Jeans" (104) - as well as to his girl-friend who is lying in bed and keeps up a flirtatious chat with him:

Ich konnte mir sofort vorstellen, wie wir zu dritt gelebt hätten. Wir hätten ein breiteres Bett angeschafft ... Ich hätte morgens die Schrippen geholt und Kaffee gekocht ... Und abends hätte ich sie beide in die "Große Melodie" geschleppt oder auch mal sie allein, und wir hätten geflirtet, natürlich dezent, wie unter Kumpels (107).

Gitti in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw, more than any of her literary fellow-youngsters, thrives on the sense of belonging to the liberated young as opposed to the world of her (forty-year-old) "Greise". She describes how she used to spend a great deal of time in discos, sucking her "vau-E" Coca Cola, admiring the disc jockeys that played sufficiently "cool" music and listening to whatever was new (35). She reminisces about the time when she had lost her beloved grandmother and found herself with too much time on her hands: Listening to the wireless she systematically discovered modern popular music for herself, first dixieland, then jazz (31) and finally beat (35).

On the other hand, she is not impressed with "the type" (Edgar Wibeau) at Bahnhof Friedrichstraße who gets on her nerves with his excessive obsession with beat music:

... der Type redete von Beat als redete er von Sex. Ich habe was dagegen, aus Beat oder meinetwegen Sex eine Religion zu machen. Ich versuchte das dem Jungen klarzumachen. Er reagierte völlig irre. Er war total besessen von Beat (49).

Jimmy, in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt, takes refuge in pop music when retiring to his mattress and his dreams (46). Klaus in Schreiter's novel makes his girl-friend Petra feel that he utterly forgets about her presence when listening to a blues record:

... woran ich mich weit schwerer gewöhnen konnte, war seine Art, Musik zu hören. Der Junge trat ab. Ich war nicht mehr da. Das Zimmer war nicht mehr. Wahrscheinlich war auch der Fußboden nicht mehr da. Außerhalb der Musik war nichts. Ich wenigstens wäre aber gern

noch für ihn dagewesen. Doch ein einziger Blick genügte, um zu begreifen, daß ich mir das vergeblich wünschte. Er lag da und pumpte sich mit dem Alabama-Blues voll (59).

Petra herself is also fond of pop music, but, like Gitti, goes in for a less extremist approach. Yet she explains her attraction to another girl in the factory as partly due to their sharing the same musical tastes (90).

2.4.5 Sexual emancipation

I

Sex is a topic which in East German works about the young which appeared in the fifties and sixties played no more than a minor part, was dealt with implicitly rather than explicitly. Relationships between members of the two sexes were discussed in detail but without reference to the physical needs of the individuals involved.

East German fiction of the seventies reflects a change of attitudes in this respect, a change not restricted to the works under consideration but also evident in, for instance, the prose writings of Volker Braun (none of which was allowed to appear before 1972), and in works focussing on women.

"Macht Sozialismus sinnlich?" was a question put to Ulrich Plenzdorf by Der Spiegel in 1976⁸⁸ in an interview on the changing trends in East German literature. Plenzdorf left no doubt that prudishness was not a quality he admired:

Sozialismus scheint zumindest dem Bedürfnis nach Sinnlichkeit nicht entgegenzustehen. ... Und wenn man nach den Grenzen fragt: Da gibt es keine. Prüderie ist eine verurteilenswürdige Angelegenheit; was man dagegen tun kann, muß man einfach tun, auch in der Literatur⁸⁹.

'Jeans Prosa' of the seventies reflects the growing conviction that no portrayal of a young person's efforts at self-realization would be complete without some explicit reference to his/her physical needs.

II

Little change is noticeable as yet in Gerisch's Das Jahr und Katrin, the text most unambiguously in harmony with the spirit of the sixties. Katrin and Michael, though in love, are rather more preoccupied with psychological, social and ideological problems than with physical ones. In the opening chapter, the two young people are seen lying in a field after a swim; neither their conversation nor Michael's retrospective description of the scene do more than hint at any physical togetherness:

Wir wateten durch das seichte Wasser und standen uns gegenüber und sahen nicht mehr irgendwo hin, wir entdeckten uns und lächelten dabei.

Wir lagen auf dem Stückchen Wiese, und wenn draußen ein Auto vorbeikam, fuhren seine Scheinwerfer den Zaun entlang, über den wir gestiegen waren, huschten über das Wasser, in dem wir gebadet hatten, nur uns erreichten sie nicht. Katrin hatte immer noch die Augen geschlossen, aber ihr Gesicht war jetzt anders, und ich hatte keine Angst mehr (6-7).

Indeed, Michael's inhibitions to tell his girl-friend that he loves her make him promise (somewhat rashly) that he will go and see the director of the school the next day.

However, as a rule, sex does, in these works, begin to receive explicit mention. The process happens (not chronologically, but logically) in two stages. At the first stage, sex is introduced as a feature associated with the 'negative rebel', thereby retaining the flavour of the forbidden fruit, enjoyable but ultimately to be sacrificed to the

pursuit of higher goals. In these books, 'positive' qualities - maturity, idealism, social commitment - seem to be inseparable from sexual ineptness, and the 'positive hero' is portrayed as having no more than a mild interest in matters physical. The young rebel, torn between the two sides, inevitably learns to accept that the joys of sex are not compatible with the satisfaction resulting from a good and socially rewarding life.

In Heiduczek's Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit it is Tolja who enthralls the girl Yana not only by verbal feats but also by his ability to express his emotions in physical terms, while sensuality is entirely absent in his rival Walter, the intelligent, honest, responsible and fair-minded FDJ secretary. It is with the latter that Yana has her first sexual experience before meeting Tolja, and it leaves her feeling unfulfilled and disappointed:

"Die Universitäten kommen jetzt näher an die Produktion heran", sagte er. "Studenten bekommen Forschungsaufträge. Gut, was."

"Ja", sagte ich, "aber den Abend habe ich mir eigentlich anders vorgestellt."

Er wurde verlegen und streichelte mein Gesicht. Ich war froh, daß ich geblieben war.

"Hast du Angst?" fragte ich.

"Nein."

Wir lagen beieinander, und ich dachte, jetzt bin ich eine Frau. Aber was ist da anders. Es war alles so schnell gegangen, und es hatte etwas weh getan. Ich verstand nicht, was Petra daran fand.

Erst als ich mit Tolja zusammen war, begriff ich sie. Er hatte eine andere Zärtlichkeit (74).

Her subsequent togetherness with Tolja is totally different:

"Komm her", sagte Tolja.

Ich setzte mich aufs Bett und beugte mich über ihn. Er strich mit seiner Hand über mein Gesicht. Seine Finger zeichneten mein Profil nach: die Stirn, die Nase, die Lippe, den Hals. Ich liebte seine Zärtlichkeit. Ich wünschte sie herbei. Die Begierde, die Lust, das Fallen bis auf den Grund.

Walter hatte ich nicht so geliebt (108).

However, while being with Walter fills Yana with peace and inner strength, Tolja's behaviour ultimately evokes in her a sense of shame and even nausea:

Ich schämte mich, daß ich so auf seinem Bett saß. Meine Bluse war aufgeknöpft, der Gürtel des Rockes geöffnet. ... Seine Liebkosungen waren mir plötzlich widerlich. ... Ich sagte immer dasselbe: "Du bist ein Schwein." (109-111)

By the end of the book, we are left in no doubt that Yana will marry Walter as soon as she has fully overcome the crisis which her infatuation with Tolja has brought about.

The constellation is not dissimilar in Kruschel's Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt. The protagonist Sabine finds herself torn between the sensuous lover but otherwise good-for-nothing Jimmy and the sexually disinterested, but intellectually and morally impeccable FDJ secretary Klaus Nettelbeck, and she ultimately comes down in favour of the latter.

Sabine's infatuation with Jimmy is described in more direct terms than those applied by Heiduczek. We are told how, when lying with her lover, all analytical reflection stops in her and she abandons herself unthinkingly to his caresses:

... er liegt bei Sabine, seine Hände sind überall und müssen nicht geführt werden. Jimmy ist erfahren, in solchen Spielen erst recht. Und Sabine denkt nicht nach, welcher Mensch denkt in solchen Stunden nach, sie weiß jetzt nur, wie sehr sie solche Stunden braucht, solche Hände, solche Lippen, solches Zittern, Beben, Bäumen, Streicheln, Saugen, Packen, Beißen, Spannen, Lecken, Entspannen ... (309).

In broad daylight Sabine is unable to uphold this ban on rational thought. She has to admit to herself that she and Jimmy fail to see eye to eye on issues of greater significance: her relationship with and moral commitment to her fellowmen, her contribution to the struggle to create a better society, the strengthening of her own inner maturity.

Klaus Nettelbeck, at twenty-five years of age, is physically shy and inhibited, terrified of falling in love with a girl who might merely be playing a game. Having spent a whole day with her visiting her friends in the borstal, he can still not bring himself to reveal his feelings for her (343). Later, during his holidays, he picks her up daily from work and takes her swimming, but any physical contact remains informed by awkwardness and inexperience:

Sie liegen nebeneinander, Sabine streicht manchmal mit ihren Fingern über seinen Rücken, seinen Hals, aber er redet, redet, ... Sie läßt sich von ihm mit Sonnenöl einreiben, spürt wohlig seine große, feste Hand, aber seine Fingerspitzen ertasten auch nicht die drei empfindlichen Stellen, ...

Jimmy kannte die empfindlichen Stellen bei ihr, er hatte sie bald entdeckt; wenn er sie berührte, schloß Sabine vor Lust die Augen. Aber Nettelbeck hatte in solchen Dingen keine Erfahrung, da fehlte ihm anscheinend jede Sachkenntnis (344).

Instead, Walter introduces Sabine to the pleasures of the mind and impresses her with undeniable intellectual and moral integrity. The novel ends with Jimmy having receded into the past (he has been drafted and will have to learn to integrate) while Klaus Nettelbeck remains the prime influence on Sabine's life and development.

Stage two in the process outlined is the express acceptance of sexuality as a positive phenomenon as opposed to being represented as a temptation to be overcome. Once again it is Edgar Wibeau who breaks the spell. Quite early in the book he enlightens his readers/audience on his sex life, which is in stark contrast to his mother's treasured image of him as a boy who has never had anything to do with girls, at least under her regime:

Stop mal, stop! - Das ist natürlich Humbug. Ich hatte ganz schön was mit Mädchen. Zum erstenmal mit vierzehn. Jetzt kann ich's ja sagen. Man hatte so allerhand Zeug gehört, aber nichts Bestimmtes. Da wollte ich's endlich genau wissen, das war so meine Art. Sie hieß Sylvia. Sie war ungefähr drei Jahre älter als ich. Ich brauchte knapp sechzig Minuten, um sie rumzukriegen. Ich finde, das war eine gute Zeit für mein Alter ... (10)

Once Edgar's initial sexual curiosity is satisfied, he continues to regard sex as one of the best, if not the best thing life has to offer. It is here that he fundamentally disagrees with his idol, Holden Caulfield, for whom sex is a source of worry rather than joy:

Ich kann nur jedem sagen, der diese Schwierigkeiten hat, er soll sich eine Freundin anschaffen. Das ist der einzige Weg. Ich meine jetzt nicht irgendeine. Das nie. Aber wenn man zum Beispiel merkt, eine lacht über dieselben Sachen wie man selbst. Das ist schon immer ein sicheres Zeichen, Leute (34).

For Edgar, sex goes with music, with dancing and with laughter. His admiration for and sense of affinity with Zaremba are partly due to the fact that for Zaremba too sex is an essential part of life as well as a source of pleasure, received and given.

It is only in his last encounter with Charlie that Edgar is confronted with the deep pain caused by sexuality being inextricably tied up with unrequited love. Yet there is no indication in the text that this does anything to change his attitude towards this aspect of human experience.

Gitti Marcinkowski in Die Reise nach Jarosław echoes Edgar's basic assumption that sex is a source of joy and an experience important to an individual's self-development. But she conducts her affairs in a much "cooler" manner which spares her any deep pain. She regards sex as a necessity of life, rather like food and drink: pleasant while it lasts but easily dispensed with if none is available. Looking back at her recent crisis, she sums up her first sexual experience like this (possibly introducing the term "Sex" into East German literature for the first time):

Ich hatte bis dahin überhaupt keine Erfahrungen mit Sex. Ich wußte, was Sex war, und der Gedanke an Sex hatte mich manchmal beschäftigt, schließlich war ich siebzehn. Ich könnte nicht sagen, daß Sex die Welt ist, aber ich räume ein, daß er einfach dazu gehört (38-9).

This tallies with her comments on the brief encounter with 'Ed' at the Friedrichstraße railway station, when her immediate reaction to him is one of displeasure because he seems to exaggerate the significance of such things as music and sex:

Ich habe nichts gegen Beat, aber der Typ redete von Beat, als redete er von Sex. Ich habe auch nichts gegen Sex. Ich habe was dagegen, aus Beat oder meinetwegen Sex eine Religion zu machen. Ich versuchte das dem Jungen klarzumachen. Er reagierte völlig irre... Ich sagte ihm, er sollte erst mal lernen, wie man richtig cool ist (49).

It is Gitti's 'cool' attitude towards life that protects her from getting seriously hurt. While Edgar exposes himself fully to his own as well as other people's emotions, Gitti holds back sufficiently to be able to withdraw in time to avoid pain for herself. Her nights spent in a sleeping bag with Jan become a pleasant routine (126, 157) and do not upset her in any way. Sitting on the edge of the road with him somewhere in Poland, she commands enough detachment to ⁱwaive the opportunity of making love: "Wir hätten uns jetzt lieben können, aber das wäre vielleicht problematisch geworden" (154).

While they are staying with Kasimierz Gerhart, Gitti remains insensitive to Jan's torments caused by increasing jealousy (233) and seriously

expects him to display a sense of humour rather than irritation and sadness when he finds her flirting with Kasimierz. All in all, Gitti's main concern is with enjoying herself if and when and with whom she pleases. Though she shares with Edgar his frank acceptance of sex as part of life, she lacks his intensity of emotion - an intensity most certainly present in her favourite novel, Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls. Gitti's own emotions seem to be permanently hampered by cliché expectations (68, 126).

In Walther's Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi the protagonist/narrator Norman Bilat displays an attitude to sexuality which is similarly direct and uncomplicated as Gitti's, though more closely related to his sense of self-liberation and fulfilment. During the phase leading up to his self-prescribed holiday from reality, he is worried by the realization that it is only when in bed with his girl-friend Ines that he can, for brief seconds, feel the sense of elation ("der Zustand") that used to be a permanent feature of his life:

Und nur bei Ines konnte ich für Sekunden den Zustand wiederbeleben. Oder zumindest die Erinnerung daran, denn leben konnte er nicht, er blitzte auf und verglühte, die Zeit war zu kurz ...

Das war es, was ich suchte bei ihr und fand. Das zog mich an - und stieß mich ab, denn ich hatte Angst davor, nur für diese wenigen Sekunden zu leben, abhängig zu werden von ihnen und damit von Ines, süchtig, festgelegt, gefangen (7).

He discovers that he has become dependent on her and feels the need to renew his ability to experience life fully and intensely. Later in the book he barely escapes once again becoming dependent on sexuality,

when making love with Shireen from Holland provokes "der Zustand" more powerfully than he has ever known it before:

Ich wärm dich, sagte Shireen, preßte meinen Kopf zwischen ihre Brüste und fuhr mit elektrisierenden Fingern über meinen Rücken.

Und dann passierte es, Übergangslos, ganz einfach, einfach so. Der Zustand war so stark wie nie zuvor. Warm und schwerelos. Leider endlich. Und doch schlug ich nicht d'erart schnell wie sonst am Boden auf: Ich konnte mir danach noch vorstellen, daß das nicht alles, sondern lediglich der Anfang von etwas war ... (122)

But Norman is a realist and soon recognizes that sexual pleasure does not make up for total absence of mutual interests and moral standards. He therefore cuts his losses and leaves Shireen, feeling no more than a passing sense of pain.

In Helfried Schreiter's novel Ich fange mit dem Anfang an the protagonist/narrator Petra describes herself as freely indulging in sexual experience whenever the opportunity offers itself. Again, sex is not seen as necessarily linked with love or emotional commitment; indeed as, on occasion, mutually exclusive.

Early sexual experience had brought little reward:

Ich hatte schon mit einem Jungen geschlafen, aber es hatte mir keinen Spaß gemacht und ihm gewiß auch nicht. Es war in einem Park gewesen ... Nachdem wir uns wieder angehost hatten, wußten wir beide, daß es aus war ... und mein Bedarf an Sex war erstmal gedeckt (51-2).

A first night with Klaus, her boyfriend, is planned by her with care and foresight, initially with the aim of killing their love in order to protect any future children from suffering her own fate (52).

The meticulously planned seduction campaign fails, partly because she cannot stop herself from wanting Klaus:

Ich schwappte über vor Zärtlichkeit und drängte mich mit allem, was ich hatte, an ihn ... Ich wollte mit ihm ins Bett, und wie ich das wollte (58).

But it also fails because Klaus refuses to be fitted into her plan and steals away while she is cooking an elaborate meal for him.

When her fury subsides, she discovers her ability to satisfy her physical needs without him:

Ich wünschte mir Hände. Sie sollten mich streicheln. Es mußten nicht unbedingt die Hände von Klaus sein. ... Aber ich hatte ... keine Hände, die mich streichelten. Nur meine eigenen Hände hatte ich. Und ich entdeckte, daß sie genausogut waren wie irgendwelche andere. Mindestens genausogut (64).

Masturbation is not the only alternative form of sexuality Petra describes as part of her search for self-fulfilment. She also tries and enjoys lesbianism which, at the time as well as retrospectively, appears to her perfectly 'normal':

Auf dem Weg zum Bus mußten wir an einer ziemlich dunkeln Ecke vorüber, da habe ich sie dann festgehalten und ihr gesagt, daß ich einen Kuß möchte. ... /Da/ umarmte und küßte sie mich, als sei es die selbstverständlichste Sache von der Welt, daß sich

zwei Frauen umarmen und küssen. ... ich kann heute noch nicht sagen, wo da ein schlimmer Unterschied sein soll zur Liebe zu einem Mann (90).

Her sexual contact with this woman friend affects her emotions more deeply than any heterosexual affair has done. For a time this relationship remains very satisfying to both women who find that they sense each other's needs much better than men ever could: Each knows how the other wants to be loved, and there is the comforting certainty that no caress will ever have to be regretted:

... was meinen Sie, wie schön das sein kann, als Frau nicht immer bremsen zu müssen, sondern sich den vielen kleinen Zärtlichkeiten voll hinzugeben, weil man eben genau weiß, daß es nur um den Austausch dieser Zärtlichkeiten geht und um nichts weiter (101).

Nevertheless, the affair ends abruptly when Petra surprises her (woman) lover in close embrace with a man. She comforts herself that night with a fellow-lodger (105) and becomes pregnant. In good Edgar/Gitti style she analyzes her feelings and finds, to her own satisfaction, that she is not in love:

Sicherheitshalber prüfte ich mich kurz, ob ich mich nicht etwa in ihn verliebt hatte, aber das Resultat war negativ (108).

III

There is, therefore, in the works under consideration an increasing and explicit acceptance of sex and sexuality as one of the areas of experience in which young people are likely to manifest their attempts to achieve self-realization and where their self-realization is likely to take a form different from that aimed at by adults. While for the young, sex is an area for experimentation and more or less totally divorced from any deeper emotional involvement, the adults depicted in the same works tend to see sex as closely linked with love. What both groups share is their desire to promote sexual emancipation.

For Christa and Alexander in Walther's Zwischen zwei Nächten, the two areas of experience are inextricably connected, both feeding back into their lives as a whole as a basis on which to solve wider problems. This is also true of Paul and Paula in Plenzdorf's novel Legende vom Glück ohne Ende where love is always physical love but where both manifest a person's ability to live a full and free life.

Physical love is depicted here as the core of Paul and Paula's relationship, the foundation of their togetherness. Making love is an act of celebration and solemnity as well as joy, and they are happy to share it with others. Children all over the city are said to be playing the "PaulundPaulaspiel" (161) which includes acting out Paula's pregnancy. Inhibitions and prudishness are portrayed as stunting the individual's liberation and development. The old ladies of neighbouring flats are fully supportive of Paul's efforts to win Paula back and see no

difficulty in cross-questioning him about his sexual relationship (213).

Paul is happy to display and discuss the topic publicly:

Er ist der Meinung gewesen, daß man über sexuelle Dinge gar nicht genug reden konnte, auch auf die Gefahr hin, zuviel darüber zu reden, weil er die Gefahr, zuviel darüber zu reden, für geringer hielt, als die Gefahr, zuviel darüber zu schweigen (215).

Sex with his first wife helps Paul to regain his moral self-respect, his sense of freedom (305) and brings about his ultimate moral and physical recovery (312f.).

It is interesting to note in this context a shift of emphasis compared with the American model of 'Jeans Prosa', Salinger's Catcher in the Rye. Holden Caulfield, the book's protagonist, is mainly preoccupied with the problem of sexual initiation to adulthood (as Edgar Wibeau rightly points out). His journey to New York and endless drifting around the city are a journey of initiation in the American tradition reaching from Mark Twain's Huck Finn to Hemingway's Nick Adams. He experiences innumerable frustrations and rejections and ultimately regresses to narcissistic projections of childhood, embodied in his little sister Phoebe. Social criticism is, of course, the other thematic component in Salinger's novel, but it is inextricably linked with Holden's psychological crisis of adolescence, as society's representatives and institutions are the major contributors to his failure to achieve sexual satisfaction and maturity.

The shift of emphasis in later works of 'Jeans Prosa' from sexual to social issues has been pointed out by Manfred Durzak with regard to

Heinrich Böll's novel Ansichten eines Clowns⁹⁰, written under the influence of Salinger's work which Böll was then translating into German:

Die soziale und altersmäßige Differenz ordnet Holden und Schnier ganz anderen Realitätsebenen zu, und auch die Liebesproblematik bei Schnier hat nichts mit der Initiationsproblematik bei Caulfield zu tun, sondern ist in das Thema der Doppelzüngigkeit einer spezifischen Gesellschaft eingelagert, die individuelles Glück im Zeichen eines äußerlich verstandenen und damit verfälschten Christentums zerstört. Die psychologische Dimension der Initiationsthematik bei Salinger wird also bei Böll von der sozialkritischen Dimension einer analytischen Gesellschaftsdarstellung ersetzt⁹¹.

Flaker, in his investigation into Eastern European works of 'Jeans Prosa', indirectly lends support to the view that the same is true in this context, when emphasizing the lack of sexual inhibition on the part of young protagonists⁹². Our own analysis of East German books of this genre seems to confirm that sexual initiation has ceased to be an issue here too while social criticism has come very much to the fore.

3 NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE AND STRUCTURE

The appearance of the rebellious young protagonist on the literary scene naturally had its repercussions in terms of the structure and narrative perspective of the texts concerned. The portrayal of the young rebel who challenges existing social norms requires the introduction of his or her particular point of view and makes the omniscient narrator, if not redundant, at least no more than the spokesman of one section of society. There is an obvious opening for the deployment of several points of view if conflict among social groups is to be depicted. In terms of structure we can expect to see a pattern that allows for the unfolding of conflict, an analysis of the nature and origins of this conflict and an outline of its final solution.

East German literature of the fifties and sixties offers numerous models of such a structure - which is ultimately that of the 'Bildungsroman'. It is reflected in a dialectical relationship between present, past and future, mirrored in the existence of three time strands that deal with the following three questions:

- 1 What is happening at present?
- 2 How has the present state of affairs come about?
- 3 How are things going to go on from here?

Where, as in Plenzdorf's texts, the novel ends with the disappearance or death of the protagonist(s), the third question obviously becomes

redundant, as no forecasts of any kind are possible. In others, such as Die Interviewer by Karl-Heinz Jakobs, the young rebel refuses to be aligned and his story is simply cut off, therefore again leaving question (3) unanswered. Nevertheless, the structural pattern as such being that of the 'Bildungsroman', the reader will inevitably put the question 'How are things going to go on from here?' himself.

3.1 Narrative perspective and structure in Utopian works

I

Plenzdorf's texts are structured in such a way as to dispel any belief in their predominantly realistic thrust. In Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., Edgar Wibeau is known from the outset to have died; yet he is happily chatting away at us from "beyond the river Jordan", as well as observing and commenting on other fictional characters who can neither see nor hear nor otherwise perceive him. What is remarkable is the ease with which we accept this fiction and suspend our disbelief, once the initial shock of realization has been overcome. Such is the book's wealth of realistic detail, such the power of Edgar's personality, that we take in our stride the utterly unrealistic, indeed the fantastic framework of the story⁹³. Edgar is allowed to have his cake and eat it, to remain loyal to himself and his ideal and yet to partake in reality. He himself is fully aware of this, as we can gather from his reflection on his continued existence after death: "Wir alle wissen hier [i.e. beyond the river Jordan], was uns blüht. Daß wir aufhören zu existieren, wenn ihr aufhört, an uns zu denken" (16f.). The continued existence occurs not at the level of reality but in the minds, in the imagination of those who have known him, as a legendary figure, an artifact unrestrained by the laws governing physical reality⁹⁴.

Edgar himself modestly assesses his own chances of being remembered as fairly slim (17), but naturally knows that, having undertaken to re-enact

his life for us, he has greatly increased his hope of avoiding oblivion for quite some time to come.

We - the readers - share with Edgar his elevated vantage point from which we survey the scene, observing and listening to his father, in search of his unknown son, and his various interviewees: Edgar's mother, his friend Willi, girl-friend Charlie and boss at work, Addi Berliner. They provide additional perspectives, their answers are met with criticism, applause or supplementary information from Edgar, all of which we absorb and have to take into consideration in our final assessment of events and characters. Obviously, we are likely to be prejudiced in favour of Edgar and his view of things, partly because of his frank and altogether delightful personality, partly because he is given a great deal more scope to expand and explain himself, but partly also because we simply accept that in most points he ought to know best. Yet, there remains on the part of the reader, - and the significance of this is easily underrated - a certain detachment from the book's protagonist and main narrator, precisely because four other (subjective) perspectives require consideration. Our sense of fairness forbids us to grant privileged status to one particular witness and uncritically accept his account, however appealing his plea. On closing the book, we therefore lack any final authorized 'objective' assessment of events.

There are rudiments of an 'objective' framework in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. in the form of the four documentary items preceding the story as such - one newspaper account of Edgar's death and three obituaries. But they too lose the appearance of objectivity when we realize that

they are based on second-hand or even third-hand information as well as containing no indication of Edgar's motives. Thus the reader has to face the fact that he is ultimately left to his own devices and that no authoritative interpretation can be gleaned from the text - the latter being, of course, an absolute conditio sine qua non for a novel that is to qualify as a 'Bildungsroman'.

The structure of Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. is of considerable complexity. It incorporates elements from at least two different literary traditions.

Firstly, the book's structural pattern shows close affinities with that of the detective or, perhaps less narrowly, the investigative novel: The outcome of the story is known to us at the outset (Edgar is dead), and the narrative reveals by means of flashbacks how this outcome has been reached. A number of witnesses are heard. Their contributions, however, remain brief and hesitant, while Edgar's comments continue to increase in length, demonstrating his growing emotional involvement. They begin to acquire the character of a coherent narrative, at times making us forget the actual interviewing situation. While the passages revolving around his mother's contribution take up no more than five pages, those relating to Willi comprise eleven; the Charlie component is forty-three pages long, and that given over to Addi adds up to sixty-one pages.

There is also a change in attitude on Edgar's part to the comments made by his father's interlocutors. While his mother's statements

meet with plain rejection ("Das ist natürlich Humbug" (10); "Das ist großer Quatsch" (16)), partial correction ("Gesagt habe ich das. Das stimmt. Aber ..." (12)), or at best cautious modification ("Ich will mal sagen ..." (15)), Willi and Charlie are never flatly contradicted by the protagonist but merely, on occasion, gently queried ("Aber ... ist trotzdem nicht ganz korrekt" (45)) and, as a norm, supported ("Das stimmt" (44); "Du bist in Ordnung, Willi" (28); "Bleib ruhig" (44); etc.). In the case of Addi, Edgar's "bester Feind" (86), things need putting right, not because Addi wrongly accuses Edgar but because he is inclined to praise him undeservedly and to put the blame exclusively on himself and his brigade:

Jetzt tu mir einen Gefallen, Addi, und halt endlich die Luft an damit. Was in mir steckte, kann ich dir genau sagen: nichts. Und in Sachen NFG überhaupt nichts. Deine Idee mit der Druckluft und der Hohldüse war nichts, und meine Idee mit der Hydraulik war auch nichts. Also wozu das Geplärre (96).

Secondly, the structural pattern of the investigative novel is modified by that of the epistolary novel which allows the reader to enter directly into the mental processes of the protagonist while also leaving him ultimately to draw his own conclusions and allowing for different interpretations. Edgar's taped messages to Willi, six in all, do not serve the function of conveying information to and communicating with Willi, but rather of confusing and mystifying him. The reader, as Edgar's confidant is in a more privileged position. But even he has to read between the lines and can never be quite certain that his interpretation is correct.

The structure is complicated further by Werther quotes not merely being used in the form of taped messages but also in conversations between Edgar and other characters (whom he is trying to impress, irritate or confuse); or indeed in passages where Edgar is not communicating with or defending himself against anyone.

All in all, narrative perspective and structure in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. can be seen to be contributing to produce a carefully designed construct rather than a straightforward realistic and unambiguous account.

II

In Die Legende von Paul und Paula (i.e. the 'Filmerzählung') the opening scene shows Paul moving out of the old building in the Singer Straße which is about to be demolished, and carrying a large framed photograph to the furniture van. Initially he conceals the picture from the eyes of curious onlookers but then, after a moment's hesitation, he allows them a full view.

This is the origin of the legend, a legend which is enacted for us in the book/film. In terms of narrative perspective we have, on the one hand, direct speech from a number of characters, without the narrator interfering. On the other hand, we are aware (and continue to be reminded) that what we read is not necessarily what was 'really' said but what has come down to us in the form of the legend (23, 33, 47, 62, 87),

the product of collective memory and imagination. What we certainly are not given is one authoritative objective version of 'the truth'.

Elaborate stage directions regarding location and time, character's outer appearance, as well as their reactions and motivation, frequently approach the form of continuous prose. They take the story further and fill in for the reader information which the film viewer would have been offered in visual terms. Yet, these passages in the third person are by no means objective in nature; they too form part of the legend, must not be seen as the contribution made by an omniscient narrator. What 'really' happened remains open to speculation.

Like Edgar, who continues to exist in the minds of readers and theatre audiences, Paul and Paula are alive in the imagination of those who pass on and embellish the legend surrounding them. They too are sheltered from the harsh effects of the passage of time affecting all those whose lives are subject to the rigorous restrictions imposed by reality.

The photo displayed to the crowd is the first picture to be hung up in Paul's new flat (88): The past becomes an integral part of the present, an outer framework is established. It is complemented by an inner framework, i.e. a song sung and played at the opening of the story and repeated in slightly modified form at the end. It introduces key ideas such as life, death, love, beauty and pain and places the story into the wider context of human experience wherever individuals choose to remain loyal to their ideal, whatever the risks, rather than accept compromise and 'alignment'.

The unfolding of the story follows a strict choreography, with Paul and Paula alternately taking the initiative and trying to avoid their fate, and with each of them suffering one near-fatal defeat before being finally re-united in the embrace shown by the photo. Compared with Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., this text's structure displays a growing tendency towards stylization, and aloofness from reality.

III

In the structure of the novel Legende vom Glück ohne Ende, detachment from reality has grown stronger still. Events are not re-enacted but told at a time when all protagonists, with the exception of Laura, have died, disappeared, gone abroad; Paula has descended into the underworld; Paul's first wife is dancing on West German stages; Collie, her second husband, is touring the country with his circus; Paul has totally vanished to an unknown destination. None of the protagonists is dead in the uncompromising 'real' sense of the word; nor is any of them alive as an active member of society. They have retreated to the fringe of events, squeezed out by a society that leaves no room for dreamers and idealists, but are unvanquished nevertheless.

The narrator, an old lady and last surviving member of the formerly sizable 'chorus' in the Singer Straße, remains as the only available witness of happier days. She acts as the bard who keeps alive the legend of Paul and Paula and their love, the counterpart to the old gentleman with the ancient camera in 'Filmerzählung' who took the photo of the two lovers:

Hier haben sie gewohnt. Hier auf der Singerstraße. Und nicht, wie manche erzählen, auf der Kraut oder auf der Blumen. Oder in Prenzlauer Berg oder Weißensee. Oder am Ende in Lichtenberg. Welche sagen in Werneuchen. Hier auf der Singerstraße haben sie gewohnt in Friedrichshain (7).

She shows her audience around what was once an island of harmonious, happy and free community life (albeit under outside pressure) and what has since been made to adapt to the overall picture of uniformity, deadly hygiene, tidiness, discipline and lack of individuality.

The old lady does not divulge her name or identity, referring to herself exclusively as "meine Person". She was the ever-present observer and is now the living memory of the past. It is not always easy to see how, in realistic terms, she can have been a witness to everything she relates, even taking into account the frankness with which Paul and Paula are said to have discussed and allowed to become public knowledge their own relationship, even "sehr intime Dinge": "Es machte ihnen Spaß oder sie konnten nicht anders oder sie dachten sich nichts dabei" (55). We find the occasional remark made by the narrator to cover herself, such as "... wenn Paula es nicht selbst gesagt hätte, würde es selbst meine Person für eine Legende halten" (56), or "Laut Paul ...", or just "Paula: ' ... '". But the essential thing is that doubts as to the objective truth of what we are told become pointless in a situation where 'the truth' is not only impossible to arrive at but also irrelevant. It is the legend itself that matters, as it is the creation of collective memory, the people's dream of what society should be like. The narrator herself attempts to differentiate between reality and fiction by observations, such as:

Die wildesten Gerüchte sind im Umlauf gewesen. Es hieß zum Beispiel, in der Singerhalle soll: ... Oder sie soll ... Oder es hieß ... Darauf soll ... In Wirklichkeit war ... (34);

or: "Manche sagen ... Es war aber ..." (8). She offers logical arguments to prove her case:

Viele sagten, Paula hat Paul ganz einfach abgepaßt und ihn zur Rede gestellt. Dann hieß es wieder, sie soll ihm einen Brief geschrieben haben, um ihn zu erpressen. Letzteres wäre aber nie ihre Art gewesen, und ersteres machte Paul durch seine perfekte Organisation unmöglich (59).

But by reporting lovingly and in detail the embellishments of the Paul and Paula story which she herself sums up as merely rumours, she in fact re-inforces the legend and makes it grow and unfold before our very eyes:

Es ist gesagt worden, Paul ist danach auf der Singer erschienen in einem Anzug, der geschimmert haben soll wie eine Rüstung, mit einem Hut auf dem Kopf wie ein Reiter und einem strahlend weißen Seidenhemd mit Rüschen und Falbeln und in der Hand ein glänzendes Beil. Mit dem Beil soll er dann unsere Haustür aufgesprengt haben, und zwar mit einem Schlag. Mit dem zweiten Schlag soll er dann Paulas Wohnungstür gesprengt haben ... (138).

What remains with us, is this account of Paul as the hero in shining armour and not the pedantic 'correct' version offered by the narrator:

Von alldem ist aber nur eines wahr und nicht Legende, daß Paul wirklich geradenwegs von seinem Schlafzimmer in unser Haus gegangen ist. Bekleidet war er aber mit

seinen normalen Sachen. Die Haustür brauchte er nicht zu sprengen, weil sie seit dreißig Jahren nicht abzuschließen ist. Und das Beil hat er von meiner Person erhalten, auf seine Anfrage hin. Wahr ist auch, daß er Paulas Wohnungstür eingeschlagen hat. Aber von einem einzigen Schlag konnte keine Rede sein. Die Tür war noch sehr solide und aus vollem Holz ... (139)

At times, the narrator herself succumbs to the charm of the legend and fails to preserve the distinction between fact and fiction. There is the scene on the lake when Paul is literally struck down by Paula's words (120), or the account of the animals' empathetic joy when Laura accepts Paul as her lover (241).

What we are ultimately left with is the view (held by Paula's colleagues at work after her death):

... daß sie in einer Geschichte steckten, die im normalen Leben nicht vorkommt, oder wenn doch, dann nur alle paar Jahrhunderte, wie ihnen Paul klarmachte (184).

Thus, as in any legend, reality and fantasy, truth and dream merge imperceptibly and in varying degree, with reality and common sense holding their ground best when it comes to solid detail, of for instance geography and chronology: the location of the Singer Straße is easily traceable on a Berlin map, and we have little cause to doubt the accuracy of the time grid provided by the narrator, at least for the early (summarizing) part of the story:

Dreiundvierzig, am fünften April, das wird keiner vergessen, in der Nacht auf den sechsten, als fast ganz Friedrichshain rechts von der Frankfurter zu Bruch ging ... (9).

It is characteristic, however, that the indications of time tend to become increasingly noncommittal, e.g.

... eines schönen Tages (227)

... eines Tages (230)

... am Morgen (235)

isolating the time scale of Paul's and the narrator's subjective experience from the time scale governing life outside. There even seems to be a discrepancy here: Considering that the final demolition of the houses in the Singer Straße goes back only one year (9), which must therefore have been the year Paul spent with Laura, it seems strange to be told about the time of his disappearance in a tone that suggests that this happened a long time ago ("Man hat noch lange nach Paul gefahndet", 319) and that all the old people who still knew Paula should have died with the exception of the one survivor in the relatively short span of time of just over a year.

But, whatever the facts, it is important for the interpretation of the story that the present merely matters as a vantage point from which to review the past and that the future is not a dimension ever to enter the novel at all. Thus, no mention is made as regards the fate of those still around: Laura, or Paul's children. They are lost sight of

the moment they have fulfilled their function in the legend of Paul and Paula.

The novel's structure follows a pattern of balance and symmetry, though of less complexity and rigour than either of the two earlier works by Plenzdorf. There is a clear division into two parts, i.e. the 'Paul und Paula' plot and the 'Paul und Paulalaura' plot. The watershed occurs about half way through the book and coincides with Paul's move from the old to the new block of flats. The first part of his life roughly follows the lines of the 'Filmerzählung', with some minor additions and alterations to the plot; however, the volume is considerably expanded to accommodate the slow and rambling account of the narrator.

After Paula's death, there begins Paul's search for her which soon focusses on Laura. He now moves into the centre of the story previously occupied by Paula, while Laura remains a figure on the fringe. We see Paul moving through a state of almost total loss of self-identity to final recovery. Chronology provides a framework for a series of more or less self-contained scenes. This part (told in the present tense) leads up to the point at which the downward movement (= loss of self-identity) is brought to a halt. Having spent a few hours with his first wife in West Berlin, Paul returns to the Eastern part of the city and begins to construct for himself a new identity. Social reality has ceased to have any hold over him.

3.2 Narrative perspective and structure in the realist novel

I

If Plenzdorf's texts are structured so as to reflect a growing detachment from reality, a withdrawal into the in-between realm of the legendary, the mythological, the opposite is true of the other works discussed here. The struggle between reality and the ideal is solved in favour of the former, however strong the desire on the part of the individual character to see reality modified and to rebel against it. Although the individual protagonist's views do find expression in the narrative perspective, the overall evaluative framework remains that of society as a whole: Rebelliousness stays contained within the framework of the socialist realist tradition, occasionally even at the expense of coherence.

Nevertheless, all texts introduce a subjective point of view of some kind. At closer inspection, we can identify two groups: Firstly, there are those works where an omniscient narrator is retained, but his point of view is supplemented by the introduction of different (subjective) perspectives, thus allowing for at least a softening of the rigorous system of objective standards and values and even opening the door to occasional ambiguity. The books that come under this category are:

Joachim Wal^hter, Zwischen zwei Nächten (1972)

Klaus Gerisch, Das Jahr und Katrin (1972)

Helmut Kruschel, Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt (1976)

Karl-Heinz Jakobs, Die Interviewer (1973)

Secondly, there are those books (and we shall find them to be in the majority and therefore rather more indicative of a general trend) where the device of the omniscient narrator has been dispensed with altogether and the narrative perspective is that of the protagonist. However, and this allows a clear distinction between Plenzdorf's texts and all others under discussion here, although there is in these works no speaker expressly identified as representing an 'objective' point of view, there is nevertheless absolute implicit clarity as to 'the truth' of what happened and the 'right' manner of assessing it. Plenzdorf tends to lead up to a situation where ultimately nobody knows everything about the case and where therefore uncertainties and doubts remain, resulting in a variety of equally possible interpretations rather than a single authoritative one. In these works, the protagonists are also the narrators. As the development they undergo is a socially desirable one, the implication is invariably that the protagonists'/narrators' views must be right. They provide us with a yardstick by which to measure opposing views held by other characters as well as their own, earlier immature ones. The perspective therefore precludes any doubts as to the nature of 'good' or 'bad', 'real' or 'illusory', 'desirable' or 'objectionable'. The socialist value structure remains intact and readers are invited to assess the situation within the purview of that structure. The group of works concerned comprises:

Werner Heiduczek, Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit (1971)

Rolf Schneider, Die Reise nach Jaroslaw (1974)

Joachim Walther, Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi (1975)

Helfried Schreiter, Ich fange mit dem Anfang an (1977)

Dorothea Kleine, eintreffe heute (1979)

II

In the first subgroup of texts, where provision is still made for an omniscient narrator who determines the overall value system by which characters are assessed, the novelty in terms of perspective and structure consists in a widening of narrative horizon by the inclusion of various subjective points of view, not infrequently resulting in the application of a montage technique⁹⁵. Individual characters of differing views and attitudes are invited to present their own cases, not unlike witnesses in a court trial.

In Walther's Zwischen zwei Nächten perspective changes constantly. There are statements and reports by an (anonymous) omniscient narrator (strongly reminiscent of Christa Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel); reflexions in the second person plural about the nature of language (as in Wolf's prologue); accounts in the third person singular approaching interior monologues as well as genuine interior monologues; and also a passage in the first person (Alexander's description of how he wrote his dissertation). In some cases transition from one perspective to another is almost imperceptible and only identifiable on close analysis. There is for instance Reinhold's interior monologue on waking up to another school

morning. He allows his mind to wander from school work (which he dislikes) to the girl he has taken a fancy to, in the midst of which the narration switches from the third to the first person singular:

... er denkt an Renate, das kleine Natchen aus der 9b. Sie wollen heute abend ins Colosseum, welchen Film ist egal, und dann die Hand halten im Dunkeln, wenn seine bloß nicht immer so schweißig würde dabei, und dann noch zu dem Spielplatz an der S-Bahn, der ist total duster. Das kleine Natchen, dolle Frau, sagen alle, trägt schon BH, nur die verdammten Idioten aus der 9b schnipsen immer dran, denen hauich auch mal eine, daß die sich totrennen ... Zu den anderen sage ich natürlich, ich hätte schon mit ihr ... (my italics) (29-30).

In other cases transition seems almost crude, with the narrator (shedding his anonymity of tone without giving away anything about his identity) overtly announcing - and justifying - the insertion of certain pieces of information he considers essential: "Das hier wird der Vollständigkeit halber nur erzählt ..." (30) or "Das wird in diesem Zusammenhang noch wichtig werden"(28).

The passage relating to Alexander's past is introduced in the following manner:

Für die Geschichte hier werden allerdings einige Erklärungen notwendig. Was vorher war, ist wichtig. Das hängt doch alles irgendwie zusammen. Da kann gesagt werden, was will. Also wie hängt das zusammen? (56)

In Christa's case it reads:

Das mußte beschrieben werden. Bei Alexander dauerte das anderthalb Jahre und konnte in neun Phasen geteilt werden. Bei Christa gab es solche Phasen nicht, aber auch bei ihr gab es Krise und Stürzen und langsames Aufstehen endlich (100).

Multiplicity of perspectives is matched by structural complexity.

The book is divided into four sections, three of them (I, II, IV) of roughly the same length (ca. 40 pp.), and one (III) making up over half the book and comprising lengthy flashbacks to the lives of Christa and Alexander (56-119).

There are two axes along which plot and meaning are structured:

There is the axis one might call the 'vertical' one - then and now, past and present, and both orientated towards the future; and there is the other, the 'horizontal' axis around which is grouped the interaction among individuals and their environment (in the widest sense). Much more so than Wolf, Walther sets the individual's experience into a context of universal dimensions, with the focus of attention in each section gradually being narrowed down until it centres on the young couple - expressing, it would seem, great faith in the well-orderedness of the universe and man's mental powers to encompass and understand it in all its complexity. Certain passages, particularly those at the opening of the four sections, strike a note of pathos, an indication that this book is still strongly indebted to the context of the sixties⁹⁶. For instance the opening of Section I:

An diesem Morgen tauchen aus dem Dunkel die geteilte Erde, das geteilte Land, die geteilte Stadt.
Die Menschen aber sind unteilbar, das ist ihr Problem

jeden Tag. Auch wenn sie jetzt noch schlafen, der Strom der Zeit strömt. (Und die Zeit ist auch nicht mehr das, was sie früher mal war). Und der gestrige Tag ist im Irrtum über den heutigen (8).

Within this universal framework life is portrayed as a complex system of various facets. Without any explicit transition, the narrator inserts into the text statements regarding the time of day and year, weather reports, newspaper headlines and reflexions on the use or abuse of language.

The plot of Walther's story follows the pattern common to all the texts we are concerned with in this section. "Vergangenheitsbewältigung" in conjunction with and as a means of mastering an existing crisis and facilitating the evolution of greater personal maturity and closer social integration.

We enter the main plot at the point where the scene is set for conflict. Alexander's decision to accept his institute's offer for him to go to Moscow for a year - a decision which, the day before, had seemed both sensible and natural to both lovers (14) - is in danger of being overthrown because Alexander (after a night with Christa) has been overcome by doubts: Can their love withstand the strain of one year's separation (20)? In the morning, both young people go to work and we have occasion to observe them in their working situation amongst colleagues (30-55).

Nearly a third of the book (56-119) is then taken up by a filling in of the background regarding Christa's and Alexander's life histories. On

page 119 we have reached the point at which the book began: The night in which Alexander tells Christa of the offer and in which he decides that accepting it would mean ruining their relationship. The story continues in the present, describing the remainder of the day during which both lovers come to change their minds before eventually reaching an agreement which demonstrates the fact that they have reached a higher level of social commitment.

When the turning-point has been reached, the decision taken, Christa and Alexander (in the second of the two nights framing the day of crisis), in the certainty of the strength of their love for each other, both direct their thoughts to the future which has now ceased to appear threatening:

... ich werde gehen, und er wird gehen, und die getrennten Wege werden sich einander zuneigen, wieder verschmelzen ... je mehr ich gehen kann, je mehr hab ich auch, und das Kind wird wachsen, das Kind wird dasein ... Zeit wird sein für uns drei, das eine Jahr Trennung wird aufgeholt, da wird keine Lücke bleiben (203-5).

This train of thought of Christa's is complemented by that of her lover; even more explicitly than hers, it includes not only the future of his little family to be but that of his colleagues and even of mankind:

... kannst nur dort etwas tun, wo du bist, kannst das tun, was du kannst, aber du bist nicht allein, und dadurch ist es nicht mehr lächerlich wenig, Christa hier neben dir und die anderen, die ihr

kennt, und die, die sie kennen und immer so weiter,
 das reicht plötzlich bis Feuerland und um die ganze
 Erde, du gibst einem die Hand, und plötzlich spürst
 du auf der anderen Seite die zweite Hand, spürbar
 ist das, und das wächst, und damit muß gerechnet
 werden (206).

The individual perspective merges with the universal one and harmony
 reigns throughout.

In Klaus Gerisch's novel Das Jahr und Katrin (1972) a tentative effort
 is made to supplement the third-person account of an omniscient
 narrator by Michael's own view of events told in the first person,
 the proportion being about two to one. While events of the crucial
 day (Michael making his way to see the headmaster) are told by an
 anonymous narrator, past events, immediate (i.e. of the year during
 which Michael was suspended) as well as more distant (childhood and
 time at school preceding suspension), are related from alternating
 points of view. Although this obviously makes for a certain direct-
 ness and spontaneity - we feel and think 'through' Michael rather
 than 'about' him - it is not always clear what renders a change of
 perspective meaningful and worthwhile. It is, for instance, difficult
 to see a good reason for why the brief summary of another character's
 life story (Richard) should be given by Michael when all it does is
 sum up what the latter has himself learnt second-hand (125). This
 can be seen as an interesting indication that by 1972 the device of
 a changing perspective was not yet sufficiently well-established for
 a young author to handle it with confidence, while yet being perceived
 as a technique which might add to the quality and appeal of a text
 depicting the problems of the young.

Structurally, Das Jahr und Katrin is modelled very closely on works such as Christa Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel. The opening sentence, "Das sollte nun Michaels Tag werden sein Tag: der Weg zu Steinbrenner" (5) takes us straight to the heart of the plot, the day when the crucial decision was taken: "Gestern abend hatte Michael plötzlich zu Katrin gesagt: 'Morgen gehe ich zu ihm!'" (5). The reader is aware, from the outset, that Michael Haller is not lost to the collective and will not stubbornly persist in his self-imposed isolation and near-anonymity. We are certain of a happy ending while following the account of the conflict preceding it. The end of the book brings the implementation of the decision taken by Michael: "Und Michael sagte: 'Hallo, Katrin. Ich geh jetzt also'." (223).

The account of events leading up to the day of crisis are not told in chronological order. It takes careful reading to identify in each instance where and when in Michael's life any particular episode fits in: We hear about the past year when he has been working at a petrol station; the time before that when his immature rebelliousness led to his being suspended from school; his childhood spent in an orphanage. Katrin's story is summed up more briefly (99-102), and merely provides a balance to Michael's: While she used to suffer from being "Irgendwer" (101) until gaining inner freedom and mature judgment, Michael is still longing to be just that. Like Christa in Walther's Zwischen zwei Nächten Katrin overcame her own problems at an earlier point and is now in a position to help her boyfriend (119).

An elaborate structure is a striking feature of Kruschel's novel Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt. Once again, a dialectic sequence of present, past and future and the ever-present interaction between individual and social forces provide the two axes along which the plot is structured.

The narrator - frankly omniscient in his handling of situations and characters as well as in possession of the 'right' system of values - is aware of the variety of choices available to him as regards the point of entry into his plot:

... wann beginnen solche Geschichten? Sie könnte ...
Sie könnte ... Oder ...

Es gibt noch andere Möglichkeiten. Die Chronologie
zum Beispiel ... Das alles und viel mehr wäre möglich
und vielleicht auch richtiger ... (7).

He decides to begin his account with the evening of Sabine's first day in freedom after twenty months in a borstal. One question dominates the story from the very beginning: Is Sabine going to be strong enough to use this freedom profitably and to cope with the risks it exposes her to? In other words: Is she going to be smothered by the weight of her past, by a sense of resentment and bitterness, or is she going to come to terms with what lies behind her and to derive from it a strength that helps her to shape her future?

We observe Sabine during that first evening, the following day (her first day in the shoe factory), the next weeks, months, up to the end

of the first year. By that time evidence is strong that, having taken a series of difficult hurdles in the course of the first year of freedom, Sabine is ready for complete social integration and a fulfilled life. The most difficult of the hurdles she has taken has been the temptation to withdraw (after an unexpected set back) into idyllic and backward looking isolation, i.e. the country cottage left to her by her beloved Onkel Karl (212). But she has overcome it and has chosen instead a life of forward-looking activity with and for others. In the final scene she is sitting in her old local but in newly chosen company, tired and happy; her eyes happen to fall on

die weitgeöffnete Tür. Das Wirtshausschild, das
Paragraphezeichen, baumelt in einem milden Winde,
und es wirkt auf sie wie ein wartender Sputnik. So
hat sie das noch nie gesehen (356).

The account of the first crucial year spent in liberty is given by an objective and omniscient narrator in the present tense. It is supplemented by a series (twelve in all) of reports by various characters in the book so that a variety of points of view are arrived at. These reports, all in the first person, take one of two forms. Either they read like the answers of accessories under cross-questioning; this is the case when the speakers are themselves in trouble, and more so than Sabine herself. Thus Peggy's section begins: "Frau Peggy Sandkorn, zur Aussage, bitte. Was können Sie uns über Sabine Wulff sagen? Aber halten Sie sich bitte an die Wahrheit". Whereupon Peggy replies: "Selbstverständlich, was denken Sie von mir?" (18).

Jimmy too faces an authoritarian inquisitor:

Darum sollte auch Jimmy befragt werden nach dem Mädchen Sabine Wulff, denn Jimmy scheint eine größere Rolle als die frühere Freundin in ihrem Leben zu spielen. Also bitte, nehmen Sie Stellung!

And understandably Jimmy is somewhat put off by this tone: "Was sind denn das für Töne? Aber meinetwegen, weil's um Sabs geht" (40).

With other contributors, such as Sabine's mother and her landlady, Frau Prieselank, the subjective account takes the form of an interior monologue. Most such statements are rounded off by a brief evaluation by the omniscient narrator: There is little chance for the reader being swayed in the wrong direction.

In terms of structure and perspective, Jakobs' Die Interviewer remains remarkably conservative in that it retains a largely chronological narrative in the third person. Jakobs does, however, accommodate a change of perspective from father to son. There is a striking abstinence on the part of the narrator regarding an additional 'objective' point of view. The two perspectives offered are diametrically opposed to each other, which makes for a considerable degree of ambiguity that remains ^{is} unresolved. However, as Ernst's views are, purely quantitatively speaking, of relative insignificance, the impression can arise that the formal framework within which the story unfolds is firmly geared to the values and objectives of adult society.

The four texts discussed, then, tend to retain the predominance of an omniscient narrator's 'objective' approach, albeit modified by the inclusion of a number of 'subjective' views of characters and events.

III

Turning to the second sub-group of texts, comprising five in all, we find that here the omniscient narrator is dispensed with altogether. Nevertheless (with one exception) the reader is not left to drawing his own conclusions and arriving at his own interpretation of the case. For guidance is given by implication, as the protagonist has undergone a development which allows him to assess his own actions, attitudes and behaviour in a new (and, we must assume, the 'right') light. By restricting narrative perspective to one only, the author gives it crucial weight and precludes any interpretation out of keeping with that offered by the (reformed) protagonist/narrator.

Heiduczek's Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit is the earliest work to rely entirely on the perspective of the young protagonist/narrator, who writes down her own story (5, 36), presumably only for her own satisfaction and with no readership in mind. Thus the plot unfolds in a one-dimensional fashion, purely as perceived by Yana; a very private account, albeit (as explained above) not therefore subjective in the sense that there is any doubt as to the nature of 'the truth' or 'reality' as opposed to 'dream' and 'illusion'. On occasion, the reader may well find his patience taxed, for Yana is

neither original nor witty. Her philosophical remarks, beginning:

Manchmal denke ich, ... (14)

Ich frage mich oft, ob ... (92)

Ich glaube, ... (92)

rarely rise above the platitudinous and self-indulgent - in keeping with the character of a somewhat sentimental young girl who is trying to get over an unhappy love affair and has an excess of time on her hands.

To quote one example:

Ich frage mich oft, woran es liegt, daß man etwas für gut hält, was nicht gut ist, oder für schlecht, was nicht schlecht ist. Man vergeudet Schmerz oder Glück nicht selten an einen Irrtum. Etwas möchte ich, das von mir bleibt.

Wenn ich aus dem Fenster schaue, sehe ich den bedeckten Himmel. Ich habe das Verlangen, durch die Wolken hindurchsehen zu können. Ich möchte durch alles hindurchsehen können.

Ich glaube, manchmal ist man nur unglücklich, weil man zu große Wünsche hat oder falsche (92).

Structurally, Heiduczek's book conforms very closely to the pattern we have found to be the norm for stories about young rebels who make good. The opening sentence, "Den Brief von Tolja lese ich immer wieder" (5) takes us to the point where Yana has been home for six days after having spent five weeks in hospital to recover from a nervous breakdown. Tolja has left: "Yana, wenn du den Brief liest, bin ich fort. Irgendwo wird sich für mich etwas finden" (5), and

Yana, physically recovered, is now faced with the task of bringing about her own mental cure, to reconstruct her life along new lines.

In order to be mentally cured she has to come to terms with what has happened and, particularly, with the part she herself played in it. Her account of the past is interspersed with references to the present gradual process of recovery, a structure once again strongly reminiscent of Christa Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel. The past is presented in the form of flashbacks highlighting stages in Yana's (though not only her) life. Starting with her recent stay in hospital, we move back to the time she spent at the ABB (a convenient terminus ad quem for the assessment of the span we are talking about) and still further back into her childhood, largely under the care of her Polish grandmother. Thus Yana works her way through to the origins of her present crisis, an order which seems psychologically convincing although she herself suspects it to be illogical and lacking in rational discipline (36).

It is only in the second third of the book (page 60 onwards) that Yana's deliberations begin to focus on Tolja, who has up to then received no more than casual mention. We are informed about his family background and thereby given the chance of a fairer judgment of his consequent behaviour.

The first indication of Yana's recovery is a fleeting thought in her mind of fellow students and teachers at the Institute: She remembers their struggle for the progress of society and begins to feel that she might have taken refuge in her illness long enough: "Vielleicht sollte

ich nicht auf die Kur warten, sondern ins Institut zurückgehen" (103).

This thought is re-enforced through reflections on the sacrifices which others have to make for her sake: "Ich muß wieder ins Institut zurück. Ich zerstöre anderen ihre Wünsche" (124). And from there it is but one more step towards the firm decision to emerge from her sheltered isolation: "Heute kam der Kurbescheid. Ich habe ihn zurückgeschickt. Nach den Messeferien gehe ich wieder ins Institut" (147).

Having come to grips with past and present, Yana is now able to face the future.

Like Heiduczek, Rolf Schneider in his novel Die Reise nach Jaroslaw relies on the perspective of the protagonist/narrator to the exclusion of any others. It is Gitti who tells her story to an anonymous listener/reader, making no attempt to explain why. Not all readers will find the book totally rewarding, as she is inclined to be sentimental and self-indulgent (Jan's furious remark that she is "eine elende grenzenlos Egoistin" (234) seems not entirely unjustified).

When Gitti finally returns to Berlin, we are left to guess whether this step is to be seen as 'the right thing' to do for her or not. In contrast to other texts discussed here, there is no evidence of any self-analysis and consequent change of attitudes having taken place on the part of the protagonist/narrator, which makes the return to society appear as the result of chance rather than conscious planning. Compared with the story of Edgar Wibeau, which literally ends with a bang, Gitti's cannot but be said to end with a whimper.

We have, therefore, an interesting ambiguity: The structural pattern of the 'Bildungsroman' is largely adhered to, in that beginning and end (parts of section 1 and the whole of the concluding section) are devoted to answering the questions, 'What is happening now?' and 'How are things going to go on from here?' and the main body of the book deals with the central issue of 'How has the present situation come about?' But what the structure lacks is provision for an interconnectedness between past and present, evidence, that is, of present reflections accompanying and colouring the account of past events. An inner framework is provided by indications of time and place rather than of stages in the inner development of the narrator.

To look at the book's structure more closely: Section 1 begins with Gitti briefly introducing herself ("Ich heie Gitti und wiege neunundneunzig Pfund" (7)), the reference to her weight being followed by hints regarding a health problem and difficult times lying behind her:

Vieles wre wahrscheinlich anders gekommen, wenn ich heute nicht achtzehn wre, sondern beispielsweise zwei Jahre jnger. Dabei bereue ich berhaupt nichts. Ich stelle das alles blo fest, sachlich (8).

The account of past events is rendered in chronological order, interspersed with sufficient time indications to allow us to reconstruct the overall time scale.

Sections 2 to 10 sum up Gitti's life up to the eve of her eighteenth birthday:

Ich war damals sieben (14)
 Ich war vierzehn, ... (16)
 Siebente Klasse ... (25)
 Achte Klasse ... (28)
 Als ich siebzehn war, .. (33)

Sections 11 to 16 relate in considerable detail the events of two nights' and (not quite) two days' roaming around Berlin, the period during which Gitti's initial uncertainty about where to go and what to do leads to the decision to retrace her beloved grandmother's origins, to find a place where love and warmth and security can still be found. Although at this stage the sequence of events continues to be carefully timed:

Abends nach elf ... (47)
 Der Tag war ein Mittwoch (56)
 Gegen vier Uhr ... (65),

places too acquire significance as Gitti is now restlessly on the move through the city of Berlin. By the end of section 16, her restlessness has given way: "Ich hatte beschlossen nach Jarosław zu fahren" (74).

A delaying factor is introduced in sections 17 to 28: Gitti first accompanies Jan to the German Baltic coast to allow him the study of Gothic monuments. Time ceases to matter as a structural device and is

replaced by indications of the itinerary, eventually leading the two young people to Poland, Gitti's original destination. Entry into Poland occurs precisely half way through the book, on page 133 (the book has 226 pages). Again it is place names that provide fixed points around which experiences cluster: Szczecin - Poznań - Wrocław - Opole - Mikolow - Katowice - Jaworzno - Chrzanów.

Sections 41 to 47 are devoted to Gitti's and Jan's stay with Kazimierz Gerhart. An outline of his life story is expressly inserted:

... ich habe die Absicht, an dieser Stelle alles zu erzählen, was ich von ihm weiß. Das bedeutet nicht, ich hätte diese Dinge selber so hintereinander erfahren (205).

Finally, Gitti returns to Berlin (sections 48 to 52), with no more than a short delay in and near Poznań when she makes a last abortive attempt to rescue her relationship with Jan. The outlook to the future ("Ich werde ab morgen arbeiten ..." (265)) reads not like a climax but rather like its opposite, a half-hearted acceptance of what her parents have planned for her.

Joachim Walther, whose Zwischen zwei Nächten of 1972 we found to be written very much from the point of view of the omniscient narrator, four years later published Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi where the young protagonist is entrusted with the narration of his own story. In contrast to Schneider's novel we are never in any doubt concerning the value system against which to assess characters and their behaviour,

attitudes, actions: The narrator is looking back at a period of unrest and rebelliousness in his life from the vantage point of newly acquired maturity and insight, thereby providing his own moral framework within which the three-week self-prescribed vacation from reality must be seen and judged.

Strictly speaking, the book's structure deviates slightly from what we have found to be the normal pattern in that the present, at which the story is told, does not as such enter into the plot. This detracts from the realism of the narrative situation, as there are no answers in the book to such questions as: Where and when is Norman Bilat telling his story? Who to? And why? (It is tempting to attribute this to an oversight on the part of the author and to imagine the insertion of a brief passage showing Norman on the train journey from Bulgaria to East Berlin working through his recent experiences.)

Norman's account of the three crucial weeks in his life begins with a description of how the plan gradually took shape in his mind (5 - 22): a shock at his own behaviour in the street (he deliberately walks into a car and only misses being run over by the skin of his teeth), an analysis of his behaviour when in the company of his girl friend, a vision of a picture he had seen a day before in the paper, and finally, the reading of a report in the paper about a flood in Rumania - all these contribute towards the eventual gelling of the plan to hitchhike to Rumania instead of spending a boring bourgeois-style holiday on the Baltic coast. Final visa difficulties

having been overcome, Norman sets out on a tour which takes him through Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and back to the GDR.

If there is no explicit reference to the present, there is the expected outlook to the future. Norman, on his return journey, to the annoyance of sleeping fellow-tourists, insists on opening the window wide and on allowing to enter into the sheltered compartment fresh air as well as all the noises and smells of the outside world: the din and smoke of the steam locomotive, the noises of a bridge being mended. In this way, he expresses his desire to become part of that wider world and to introduce his unwilling fellow-travellers to the same experience⁹⁷:

Die Urlauber rekelten sich, husteten und sahen
mißbilligend auf mich:

Dann nach draußen.
Erst unwillig und verschlafen.
Schließlich aber interessiert und wach (144).

Norman's trick has had its effect: people are displaying interest and awareness. But, so he realizes, this will not last. What is needed is an entirely new strategy to arouse and preserve that state of alertness and creative unrest which three weeks before had sent him on his eventful journey: "Ich mußte mir wohl insgesamt etwas Neues einfallen lassen" (144).

Wenn Sie meine Geschichte unbedingt hören wollen - na gut. Ich habe sie noch keinem erzählt, hat mich auch noch keiner danach gefragt, und wenn ich sie Ihnen erzähle, dann glauben Sie nicht, daß Sie mir besonders sympathisch sind oder so, aber Sie haben angehalten und mich mitgenommen. Vielleicht erzähle ich sie Ihnen auch nur, weil ich sie mir einmal selber erzählen muß (5).

This opening paragraph of Helfried Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an sums up in a nutshell what needs to be said about the story's perspective: An 'ich' (nineteen-year old Petra) is telling her own story to a 'Sie' (a driver who is giving her a lift to Blaatzen where her boyfriend Klaus is in prison) partly to please the driver, partly - or, perhaps, most importantly - because she herself wants to be quite clear about the past before tackling present and future. Once again, we are looking at a story told by a young protagonist whose inner development provides the moral criteria required to assess her own and others' previous behaviour.

In terms of structure, the by now familiar pattern applies: We enter the story in the present (Petra on her way to Klaus) from whence the past is being reviewed and reappraised. Past events are told in chronological order: "Ich denke, ich fange mit dem Anfang an" (5), Petra declares; and so she does: from her birth, through her childhood, her parents' separation, her love affair with Klaus, the decision to leave Berlin and work in a factory rather than take up the university place she has been offered, her lesbian love affair with Karin, near-marriage to Jürgen, loss of her baby and

final pending reunion with her only ever real love Klaus: "Wieder war eine Geschichte abgebrochen. Und nun bin ich unterwegs, um wenigstens eine - nein, meine - zu einem guten Ende zu bringen" (123). Thus the past merges directly into the future, symbolized by Petra returning to Klaus a drawing of a green field with red and yellow flowers he once made for her.

Like Heiduczek in Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit, Schreiter makes a point of allowing the narrator to interrupt her story by occasional reminders of her present situation, that is the car journey with a sympathetic driver. However, in contrast to the earlier work, these insertions do not demonstrate character development towards greater moral and social maturity, but remain gestures which might have been more successful in a filmic than in a literary context:

Was schauen Sie mich so an? Ist es in Ihren Augen nicht erlaubt, daß sich Kinder über ihre Eltern Gedanken machen? (28-9)

or

Sie finden es sicher gut, die Strecke zu kennen, jeden Bahnhof jeden Aufenthalt auf die Minute genau, kein überraschender Halt auf freier Strecke ... (70)

or

Ein Kaffee wäre nicht schlecht. Aber es darf nicht zu lange dauern ... Fahren Sie oft diese Strecke? Vielleicht sehen wir uns da mal wieder (102).

Since the driver's answers remain unrecorded, we are made to feel as if we were listening in to only one part of a telephone conversation where we have to compute what the questions to the answers we hear might have been.

Finally, there is Dorothea Kleine's eintreffen heute - another first-person narrative by and about a young girl passing through a period of doubt and unrest and eventually finding solid ground under her feet. In structural terms a very simple story: twenty-five chapters describing in chronological order the emergence, growth and ultimate overcoming of problems of personal and social identity. We are taken through the stages of this process, one by one, with the turning-point occurring half-way through the book when Agnes abandons the security of family and party in favour of independence and reality:

Mein schneller Abschied sollte nicht der Flucht aus einer verlorenen Schlacht ähneln. Ich sah mich nicht als Verlierer an. Mochte es nach außen auch so scheinen, in Wahrheit hatte ich über mich selbst entschieden und nicht entscheiden lassen (118).

She herself sees her departure as manifesting her search for an adult, mature and upright self: "ein Abschied, der Abschied von der Jugend, der Abschied von Menschen und einem alten, in die Irre gegangenen Ich" (118). On being advised by the Personnel Officer in the factory to spend her weekends at home, she rejects this suggestion categorically: "... man soll im Leben keine Kompromisse eingehen" (119).

The author dispenses, as did Walther in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi, with a second narrative level set in the present, so that the entire story is told as having happened in the past. The outlook to the future is rather more an implicit than an explicit one: Agnes, having proved herself at all levels, finally finds herself fully integrated into the collective:

Zum erstenmal seit meiner Ankunft in Schwarzenberg
fühlte ich mich richtig aufgenommen, so absurd das
im Augenblick auch schien. Ich saß auf der harten
Bank und wartete, und ich wartete auf meine Freundin
Toni (212).

IV

To sum up, then, we can say that with the exception of Heiduczek's Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit (which preceded Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. and generally can lay claim to rather greater originality than any of the other works discussed in this section), the use of a first-person narrative to the exclusion of an omniscient narrator tends to be the norm from the mid-seventies onwards. This may be seen as the result of a learning process on the part of the writers (with Plenzdorf's highly successful experiment to serve as a model) but also as an indication that to dispense with an explicit objective value framework no longer implied a serious risk that an author's work might not be accepted for publication.

4 OPPOSITION THROUGH LANGUAGE

One distinctive feature common to all texts under consideration here, and, indeed, common to the genre of 'Jeans Prosa' as a whole, is the recourse to a variety of modes of speech. Flaker⁹⁸ states categorically:

Die Anwesenheit einer anderen Sprache ist eine ständige Eigenschaft des JP-Modells /Jeans-Prosa/, ganz gleich, wie sehr sie hervorgehoben wird und welcher Natur sie ist.

Diversity of language satisfies aesthetic needs as well as a desire to express in linguistic terms the existence of differences among social groups, resistance to established society.

Significantly, the young are not the only such group. The old, too, have recourse to a form of speech which sets them apart from society and establishes a link with the young. Their main achievements form part of a different age and a different society. They helped to lay the foundations for the new social system which they cannot always associate themselves with in its present form. Though in quantitative terms the language of the old is of little significance, its sheer existence serves to add weight to the linguistic expression of opposition. There is a secret - and, in some instances, an outspoken - alliance between the members of the old and the young generations, an alliance against the middle generation which represents the establishment.

Diversity of speech in the texts under consideration is further enhanced by the fact that 'adult speech' itself is not merely seen as a neutral phenomenon, a general norm against which degrees of deviation can be measured; it is shown to display features expressive of a certain view of society and thus epitomizes, for all those not fully integrated, established society's least desirable qualities, i.e. moral hypocrisy and the intention to exert ideological manipulation.

Diversity of expression does not stop here; it also includes a tendency on the part of the old and the young totally to avoid using verbal language and to resort instead to non-verbal or body language. This must be seen as an expression of distrust towards all verbal language regarding its capacity to convey the truth and to serve as a vehicle for genuine communication. Characteristically this step of complete withdrawal from conventional verbal forms of communication is restricted to the texts of Ulrich Plenzdorf, the only ones that end with the defeat of reality and the victory of the ideal.

There is one further feature peculiar only to Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., but highly significant within the context of diversity of language: Literary models are used not merely to provide ideas and motifs but also as a source of enrichment of the work's language texture.

4.1 The language of the young

I

The language of young rebels in the works under consideration differs markedly from that used by adults representing the establishment of East German society, i.e. parents, teachers and others in authority. For the sake of convenience I shall refer to the former as 'youth jargon', without wishing to get involved in a discussion of the precise meaning of this term. A sufficiently loose definition seems to be that offered by Mario Pei in his Glossary of Linguistic Terminology⁹⁹:

Jargon - a collective term for words, expressions, technical terms, etc, intelligible to members of a specific group, social circle or profession, but not to the general public.

- granted the proviso that for "intelligible" one might need to read "familiar". A more specific definition of 'youth jargon' to fit the precise context we are dealing with here, is given by Ewald Lang in his analysis of Edgar Wibeau's speech¹⁰⁰:

In diesem ... Sinne gibt es einen Jugendlichen-Jargon, d.h. ein Ensemble sprachlicher Ausdrücke oder Ausdrucksformen, die für die Redeweise jugendlicher "zwischen Pubertät und Berufsabschluss" (wie Weimann ganz zutreffend sagt) konnotiert sind, und dieser Jargon existiert unter Einschluss diverser sozioökonomischer, soziologisch oder landschaftlich geprägter Subvarianten als empirisch zugängliche, zumeist passiv beherrschte Kommunikationsvariante für sämtliche (nativen) Sprecher - in diesem Falle: des deutschen Sprachgebiets.

'Jargon', the language of a particular social group, differs from '(social) dialect' in that it is almost exclusively restricted to the field of lexis and affects syntax only very slightly. It has certain similarities with what M.A.K. Halliday terms 'anti-language',¹⁰¹ as, like the latter, it is "a language relexicalized", with a

different vocabulary in certain areas, typically those that are central to the activities of the subculture and that set it off most sharply from established society.

Indeed, youth jargon in the texts under consideration is not merely "relexicalized" but, like anti-language, overlexicalized, with a proliferation of synonyms for certain key ideas.

How 'realistic' is the youth jargon in these East German works? There can be little doubt that we are dealing with a product of stylization - an artifice -, or, to be more precise, a compound of on the one hand concrete, natural, realistic features, and of general and artificial features on the other. It is 'fictitious jargon', that is:

eine konnotierte Subvariante der deutschen Standardsprache, die es exakt als solche empirisch nicht gibt, die aber dennoch exemplarisch ist im Hinblick auf die mit ihr verbundenen Zwecke und Rezeptionsbedingungen¹⁰².

Flaker explains the same in somewhat simpler terms:

Das Prinzip der Annäherung an die spontane mündliche Rede wird in der Weise verwirklicht, daß man versucht, die Illusion mündlichen Erzählens zu schaffen - also mit einer Stilisierung¹⁰³.

Which, of course, boils down to not much more than the Kantian-sounding view that literary speech is, by definition, dependent on a pool of 'real' speech from which it draws its material, but is also the outcome of an artistic process which imposes form on a "given manifold". Or, as a twenty-three year-old participant in the Sinn und Form debate about Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. put it:

Ein einzelner Jugendlicher spricht natürlich nicht so, aber wenn man die Ausdrücke von einigen Dutzend summiert, erhält man als Ergebnis die Sprache Edgars¹⁰⁴.

II

Recourse to youth jargon in a literary work is dependent on the availability of a young speaker/narrator (or several such). Looking at the texts in question, this requirement is fulfilled in three ways: Firstly, the author may dispense with a narrator so that the text consists purely of monologues and dialogues as in Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.: thus the two 'rebels'¹ (i.e. Edgar's and Willi's) speech is offset against the language of those whom Edgar would describe as "aligned" (his mother, Charlie, Addi Berliner and his father)¹⁰⁵.

Secondly, the young rebel can be the narrator, thus giving ample opportunity for the introduction of youth jargon, an opportunity which is seized on in varying degrees. Thus, in Schneider's Die Reise nach Jaroslaw, Gitti draws upon youth jargon throughout, while, at the other end of the spectrum, the young narrator in Kleine's eintreffe heute resorts to it only rarely.

Lastly, there are those texts where, as we have seen, the role of the omniscient narrator is generally retained but supplemented by passages or even whole chapters written from the particular points of view of individual characters. This we find in Walther's Zwischen zwei Nächten, Kruschel's Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt and Jakob's Die Interviewer. Jargon then enters in conjunction with certain points of view only.

As identified earlier, the 'relexicalization' or even 'overlexicalization' process which characterizes youth jargon affects those areas of the young rebel's lexis that are central to his life and range of experience and, in particular, to his stance of dissociation from established society. It is only to be expected, therefore, that there will be synonym clusters in connection with terms referring to the young person's everyday life (his activities, objects surrounding him, the human body), his relationships with adults in general and with adults in authority in particular, as well as with his life and work at school. To this must be added expressions describing his emotions and value judgements. Overlexicalization will be found to be particularly conspicuous in relation to phrases expressing approval and disapproval.

The impact made by Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. will be very noticeable in this context. There is no area of vocabulary (excepting that denoting sex and sexual behaviour) to which Edgar Wibeau has not made an original contribution. It is for this reason that expressions to be found in this work are marked with an asterisk.

III

A sizable list of youth jargon expressions designate forms of locomotion: moving fast is described as:

getobt kommen³⁶
 hechten³⁶
 hetzen
 spurten³⁶
 traben
 (durch das Zimmer) turnen

Moving slowly is referred to as:

abschieben³⁶
 angeschlurft kommen
 aufkreuzen³⁶
 latschen³⁶
 losrobber³⁶
 sich verkrümeln³⁶

Seeing/looking can be:

beäugen³⁶
 gaffen

glotzen³⁶
 glubschen
 schnüffeln³⁶

Talking is circumscribed as:

(etwas) abschießen³⁶
 anfauchen
 blödeln
 nuscheln³⁶
 quasseln
 quatschen
 schmettern
 seinen Speech loslassen³⁶
 sülzen³⁶

A state of being lazy or not getting on well with one's work:

blaumachen³⁶
 das rollte nicht bei ihm³⁶
 rumpingeln³⁶
 sich fläzen³⁶

Working hard:

knüppeln
 rumoren
 sich abhetzen
 sich abmurksen³⁶
 sich fast den halben Arsch aufreißen³⁶
 schuften³⁶
 wrocken

Laughing can be:

angrienen
 grinsen³⁶

Sleeping is: pennen³⁶

Dying is described as:

abkratzen³⁶
 den Löffel abgeben³⁶
 über den Jordan gehen³⁶

Interpersonal relationships can be:

(jemanden) anhimmeln³⁶
 (jemanden) hoppnehmen
 (jemanden) piesacken
 protzen
 sich (an jemanden) ranschmeißen

An important aspect of young people's lives is that they see themselves as resisting pressure, fighting attempts to align them, sometimes giving in. Winning a victory over somebody (or attempting to do so) is referred to as:

(jemanden) beknien³⁶
 (jemandem) etwas aus dem Kreuz leiern³⁶
 (jemanden) rumkriegen³⁶
 (jemanden) schaffen

Expressions for being defeated are:

in die Knie gehen
 groggy sein
 (jemandem) aus der Hand fressen
 Pfötchen machen³⁶
 weich werden

Clothes and other material possessions are generally treated derisively (with the exception of certain highly prized items such as jeans). They are referred to as:

Klamotten[¶]
 Lappen[¶]
 Plunder[¶]
 Plünnen und Rapeiken¹⁰⁶
[¶]

Buildings, particularly modern and showy ones, are dismissed as:

Betonriese
 Bude[¶]
 Kasten
 Klotz
 Kolchose[¶] 107
 Moder
 Riesenstall
 Schuppen

A large car is ridiculed as a "Schlitten"

Food features as:

Fraß
 Freßchen[¶]

and for a sandwich the Berlin dialect terms of

Schrippe
 Stulle

are used.

The parts of the body get jargon names:

Eyes:	Scheinwerfer ³⁶ Schweinsritzen ³⁶
Mouth:	Klappe
Face:	Fresse ³⁶ Visage
Head:	Birne ³⁶ Murmel Schädel ³⁶
Hair:	Loden ³⁶ Platte ³⁶
Hands:	Klauen ³⁶ Pfoten ³⁶ Pranken

In their leisure time, young people portrayed in the books concerned do what young people do all over the world, i.e. listen to tapes and cassettes, meet in discos, go to the pictures. Accordingly, their jargon has an international or, more precisely, an Anglosaxon flavour:

Beat
Disko/Disco³⁶
Fete
Kinofan³⁶
Mikro³⁶
Recorder (anwerfen)³⁶
satter sound³⁶
shake hands
Show³⁶
Song³⁶

The sexes and their relationships with each other, an area of obvious concern to the young, should be assumed to feature large in their

jargon. Yet, the texts in hand do not fully bear out this assumption. Admittedly, there are jargon expressions for girls (as used by boys), such as:

dolle Frau
 Maus
 Mäuschen
 die aus die neun-be
 Puppe
 dufter Kumpel

or, reversely, expressions used by girls and referring to boys,
 e.g.

Matz
 Typ

Some phrases describing sexual attraction and contact can be found:

stehen auf
 scharfsein auf
 reserviert sein für
 was Brauchbares aufreißen
 fummeln
 sich wieder anhosen

But, all in all, one is struck by the relative absence of jargon from the sexual sphere, including emotional or physical reactions connected with it. This could be interpreted as reflecting: inexperience, shyness or prudishness on the part of the characters concerned or, indeed, of society at large; a failure on the part of authors to draw on linguistic diversity which exists but has not

been tapped for literature; or an absence of such terms in real life. Only in one of the texts does a youngster use any openly sexual vocabulary; they are matter-of-fact phrases, uttered in a deliberately 'cool' and grown-up tone:

jemanden im Bett haben
einen Orgasmus haben
sich ein Kind machen lassen

The relative absence of sexual terms in works of 'Jeans Prosa' in general and in Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. in particular (the latter being the only East German work of this genre to have attracted extensive analyses by literary critics) has not gone unnoticed.

Flaker¹⁰⁸ comments on two related phenomena: on the one hand, the emancipatory effect of 'Jeans Prosa' which helps to break down barriers erected by puritanism of various brands (Christian, bourgeois or Communist); and on the other hand the loss of erotic qualities in sexual relations amongst young characters in contemporary 'Jeans Prosa' who go for the ironic and 'cool' approach. He recalls Edgar's reaction to Werther's remark: "Ich lese in ihren schwarzen Augen wahre Teilnahme an mir und meinem Schicksal. Sie ist mir heilig. Alle Begier schweigt in ihrer Gegenwart". Whereupon Edgar comments: "Leute! War das ein Krampf! Vor allem das mit der Begier. Das heißt, so ganz blöd war es auch wieder nicht. Ich kam einfach nicht mit dieser Sprache zu Rande. Heilig!"

Oschlies¹⁰⁹ in the context of Eastern Europe remarks on the discrepancy between on the one hand the wealth of youth jargon vocabulary referring to sexual matters actually used by young people in Eastern European countries and the conspicuous absence of serious analysis of such jargon in literary criticism or scientific literature on the other. Oschlies attributes this to a lack of interest on the part of writers and scholars as well as to ideological constraints. It is worth noting that this underrepresentation of the sexual sphere in literary youth jargon appears to apply even to texts written in those languages which naturally include 'four letter words' in everyday speech. Flaker¹¹⁰ quotes the Serbo-Croat writer (and Henry Miller translator)

A. Soljan:

Aber unsere Fünfbuchstabenwörter werden nicht nur terminologisch gebraucht, um bestimmte Organe oder ihre Funktionen zu bezeichnen, sondern auch im täglichen Leben als Verlegenheitswörter, als Bestandteil des Ausdrucks von Mißbilligung oder Einverständnis, Überraschung oder Bewunderung, als wichtiger Faktor unserer spezifischen volkstümlichen Kunst des Fluchens, das bei uns fast ausschließlich an den sexuellen Wortschatz gebunden ist - zunächst wörtlich, dann aber auch in zahlreichen übertragenen Bedeutungen ...

Soljan then proceeds to deplore the dominance of powerful taboos which inhibit the writer and translator from taking advantage of an existing wealth of expression.

Ewald Lang¹¹¹ explains the absence of jargon expressions from the sexual sphere in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. by Edgar's freedom

from problems in this area. This, Lang argues, frees him from the need to cover up any deficiencies by a show of verbal strength.

In accordance with the (all-)German tradition of vulgarisms, the anal sphere is relatively liberally represented in these texts, whether in the form of purely descriptive phrases:

ein Ei legen[¶]
 sich verflüssigen[¶]
 pinkeln/Pinkelpause/Pinkelbude

or in metaphorical (pejorative) expressions:

alle Forzlang[¶]
 armer Arsch[¶]
 bequemes Arschloch
 Sauerei[¶]
 säuisch[¶]
 verarschen[¶]

Kissenpuper[¶]
 Scheißboot[¶]
 Scheißladen
 Scheißlaune
 du Scheiße![¶]
 Schiß haben[¶]
 Schiß kriegen[¶]

IV

A young person resisting pressures by those in authority, will find these pressures manifesting themselves most strongly and immediately in his relations with parents, teachers and the police. Jargon used in this context by East German literary figures of the seventies is neither new nor peculiar to the East German scene. What makes it worth commenting on is (a) that it should have found its way into literature at all (given that this was not the case up to 1970),

and (b) that it should not be different from youth jargon one might expect to find in a capitalist society or literature. There is no more evidence of any striking difference between East and West German youth jargon in this area of speech than in any other considered here.

Parents are referred to as:

meine Alten
die Erzeuger*
die Greise
mein alter Herr

The police are:

Bullen*
Grüne

Doctors feature as: Mediziner.

Adults in general (that is anyone over the age of twenty-five or so) are dismissed as:

so ein Alter
die olle Frau
so'n Vater
so ein Vierzigjähriger

Or, they are categorized by their occupations, as:

Bootsmensch*
 Gemüsefritze
 Museumschef*
 Reifenfritze*

A certain tension in young people's relationships with adults finds expression in phrases such as:

daß ihm das auf die Ketten geht
 dann kam wieder der ganze Riemen
 die dich einfach nicht für voll nehmen und superschlaue
 Sprüche herbeten
 wollen Sie sich anvettermicheln?

Predictably, school life is an area where young jargon flourishes:

Kumpel*
 Mathe
 Pauker/Chef-Pauker
 Penne
 Pennäler
 Schwarte
 Streber
 Typ*
 Uni

Specifically East German contributions to the traditional 'Pennäler-sprache' are:

E-O-Es (= Erweiterte Oberschule)
 Stabü (Staatsbürgerkunde)

Work in school is seen in terms of a race where a reasonable success record is not sufficient but winning a victory over one's competitors is crucial:

an ... herankommen
 auf Endspurt machen
 gleichaufziehen
 tote Rennen
 vorbeiziehen

Working hard at school is circumscribed as:

sich abrackern
 pauken
 sich schaffen/geschafft werden
 schlauchen

The opposite of hard work at school can be:

die Schule bloß abreißen/runterreißen
 nicht draufhaben
 durchhängen
 groggy sein
 schlaff sein

Skiving is: blau machen³⁶

and doing a piece of work in a rush: auf die Schnelle zusammenhauen.

Sending a pupil down is: exen³⁶

and being top of the class and performing particularly well:

sein Heu reinhaben
 einsame Klasse sein
 einsame Spitze sein
 ein tolles Feuerwerk abziehen

V

Quickness in evaluative response, that is in deciding whether something or somebody is 'good' or 'bad', is a general characteristic of young people. Their reactions to the world are still largely spontaneous, subjective and often emotional, not yet modified by disillusionment, caution and rational considerations. The lexis of youth jargon naturally reflects this.

In terms of expression of approval, there are certain undisputed favourites:

cool*
 edel* (or stinkedel)
 irre
 lässig
 locker
 toll

Other adjectives/adverbs of considerable popularity are:

dufte
 echt*
 fetzig
 Klasse
 prima
 (echt), progressiv
 sauber*
 schau
 urig

They are supplemented by more commonly used expressions such as:

aufregend
 erstklassig
 fabelhaft
 phantastisch

Nouns expressing praise and approval are:

(einsame/große) Klasse
 ein Steher

as well as (by a process of inversion of meaning):

dieser Hund^{3*}
 ein Vieh^{3*}

Verbal phrases signifying approval can be:

einfetzen
 in Ordnung sein^{3*}
 schmecken

Corresponding to expressions of praise and approval there are those expressing criticism and disapproval. Stave and Oschlies¹¹² comment on the greater proliferation of youth jargon words in the context of the low and undesirable as opposed to the elevated and praiseworthy. However, this is not borne out very clearly by the evidence available in East German literary works of the seventies.

Top of the list are:

lahm (the opposite of 'dufte')
 tiffig* (the opposite of 'cool')¹¹³

They are closely followed by adjectives such as:

affig
 belemmert
 beschissen
 blöd*
 doof
 fies*
 gottverdamm
 mies* (with the superlative 'obermies')
 monoton
 öde*
 vergammelt
 vermurkst
 vertrieft*

Nouns indicating disapproval are:

(kein) Aas*
 Idiot*
 Kissenpuper*
 Krampf
 Pygmäe
 Quark
 Spinner
 Rindvieh
 Ziege

Verbal phrases can express disgust and criticism:

anstinken*
 auf den Docht gehen
 die Nase voll haben
 sauer sein*
 auf den Wecker gehen

Spontaneity, an imaginative and creative approach to language and the ability to feel and express unqualified astonishment are reflected in humorous, grotesque or drastic similes and metaphors favoured by the young rebels. They are, of course, frequently drawn from existing Berlin dialect:

abtreten
 alt aussehen³⁶
 Augen wie eine Butterblume machen
 aussteigen³⁶
 Bauklötzer staunen
 glatt umwerfen
 da hat es bei mir ausgehakt
 Mann, das war ein Ei!
 aus dem Sessel kippen
 aus dem Sessel federn
 da setzte es bei mir aus³⁶
 da stehste Kopp und suchst die Beene
 fast gar nicht töten³⁶
 fast gar nicht umbringen³⁶ 114

Edgar Wibeau's declared favourites are:

ich dachte, mich streift ein Bus³⁶
 ich dachte, mich tritt ein Pferd³⁶

which are formed in analogy to the referenced expressions "ich dachte, mich laust der Affe" and "ich dachte, mich knutscht ein Elch"¹¹⁵.

A metaphor indicating inner amusement is: sich beölen³⁶.

Re-enforcement of what is said is achieved by adding an exclamatory:

ehrllich!
sachlich!
Tatsache!

or just:

eh
wa?

Vagueness is a characteristic of young people's speech. It is reflected in incomplete enumerations and the use of indefinite expressions, e.g. containing "irgend" or "und so". This allows the speaker to remain suggestive and imprecise. Lang¹¹⁶ sees it as a linguistic manifestation of "Imponiergehabe", particularly regarding sexual matters:

nichts mit Küssen und so
fortwährendes Gerede über Männer und so
Charlie war schon im Regenmantel und allem[¶]
irgendwas mit Biologie ... in irgendeinem Riesenstall
irgendeine verdammte Wahrheit
so ein Angeber oder was das sein sollte[¶]
sie würde ganz blaß aussehen, so feucht irgendwie,
wie verletzt oder so
wenn man bei Natchen da ranfaßt, da wird einem so mulmig

"Imponiergehabe", as merely the other side of awkwardness, may well be at the root of certain involved and somewhat stiltedly archaic expressions used when young characters assess their own response towards and impact on people and situations:

als ich noch nicht meinen vollen Charme hatte und
 nicht dieses ausgeprägte Kinn³⁶
 ich zog sofort mein hinreißendstes Lachen auf, mit
 dem ich allgemein einen sehr guten Eindruck mache
 Es dürfte inzwischen klargeworden sein, daß ich
 vorhatte, mich entscheidend zu verändern
 Ich prüfte mich kurz, ob ich mich etwa in ihn
 verliebt hatte, aber das Resultat war negativ
 Ich prüfte mich noch mal kurz und fand, daß ...³⁶
 Ich überprüfte ihn und fand, daß ...

Youthful faith in the originality of one's views appears to be the
 reason for frequent insertion of introductory phrases such as:

ich finde³⁶
 ich glaube³⁶
 ich meine³⁶

This runs parallel with the need for re-assurance and understanding,
 reflected in rather more tentative and circumlocutory forms:

ich hoffe, es denkt jetzt keiner, ...³⁶
 vielleicht versteht mich keiner³⁶
 vielleicht kann sich das einer vorstellen³⁶
 ich weiß nicht, ob das jemand kennt
 ich weiß nicht, ob mich einer begreift/versteht³⁶

The need for re-assurance is coupled with an implicit assumption
 that there is a complicity between the young narrator and his readers/
 audience. Hence forms of direct address such as:

Leute³⁶
 ihr³⁶

Exaggeration is frequently met with in youth jargon. It occurs in statements about numbers:

Wir standen da zu dreitausend Mann in dem Treppenhaus
und warteten auf Einlass³⁶
die drei Millionen Heiminsassen
Schlipse, von denen sie mindestens einen Zentner zu
Hause im Schrank liegen haben

An dem Tag ... hatte ich schon ungefähr zwei hoch
sechs Ballons aufgeblasen, und beim zwei hoch
siebenten wurde mir schwarz vor Augen.

Delight in imaginative exaggeration is reflected in the picturesque metaphors and similes which abound in the works under consideration:

sich den halben Arsch aufreißen³⁶
klar wie Buttermilch
jemandem Dampf machen
jemandem auf den Docht/Wecker gehen
im Eimer sein
die Fäuste oben haben³⁶
aus dem Hut³⁶
über den Jordan gehen
jemandem etwas aus dem Kreuz leiern³⁶
so rot wie ein Legehuhn
den Löffel abgeben³⁶
die Luft anhalten³⁶
eine Meise haben
an die Nieren gehen³⁶
etwas auf der Pfanne haben³⁶
einen Riesenaufriß machen

Perhaps the most elaborate example of such metaphorical speech occurs in Walther's Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi: "Ich spürte, wie mein Reise-nerv zu vibrieren begann. Mein Rundsicht radar rotierte".

Words of non-German, usually British or American origin, exert a strong attraction on the young rebel. They introduce an exotic

flavour and satisfy the desire to demonstrate membership in the international sub-culture of the young. Significantly, these expressions largely relate to leisure time activities, the world of pop music and films.

There are numerous nouns:

army
 Beat
 Code³⁶
 Disco/Disko³⁶
 Fan
 Girlfriend
 Happening³⁶
 Humbug³⁶
 Lord³⁶
 Recorder³⁶
 Saloon
 Service³⁶
 Sex
 Sherriff
 Show³⁶
 Song³⁶
 Sound³⁶
 Speech³⁶
 Story
 Western

A small number of adjectives and adverbs occur:

groggy
 high³⁶
 old³⁶
 okay

There are two verbs, used by Edgar Wibeau: One ("jumpen") is simply an English verb with a German ending; the other ("popen", as in "das poppt") is only vaguely related to English and represents a

formation in analogy to other monosyllabic verbs (normally used in the impersonal third person singular present) containing a short vowel and a final plosive, such as "das fetzt" (currently en vogue) and "das schockt" (on the decline)¹¹⁷.

Words taken from languages other than English/American are very few in number (with Russian practically not represented):

Clou
Fakt*
Fete
klaro
Kolchose*
Jux

VI

Looking back over the above lists of jargon words and phrases relating to young people's factual and emotive experience, we can identify a number of pervasive, albeit occasionally contradictory features.

To begin with a negative observation, hardly any of the expressions listed can claim to be original in the sense that they are a product of East German youth of the seventies (or the authors portraying them). On the contrary, most of them have long been part and parcel of traditional German 'Pennälersprache' or of general Berlin speech. Margot Heinemann¹¹⁸ remarks on the obvious predominance in

this context of Berlin usage over forms of speech current in other parts of the German Democratic Republic:

Dem Berliner Sprachraum kommt ... offensichtlich Vorbildcharakter zu. So kann man beobachten, daß sich sächselnde Jugendliche im Ausland nicht um die Anwendung der Literatursprache bemühen, sondern erst einmal berlinern (117).

Obvious exceptions are two genuinely East German contributions to youth jargon found in the books under investigation, i.e. "E-O-Es" and "Stabü", naturally of fairly recent and East German origin.

Speakers of East German or any other Western or Eastern European youth jargon do not seem to aim at originality regarding the individual's speech: Edgar Wibeau's language is not essentially different from that spoken by his chum Willy; in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt Hertha speaks very much like the protagonist Sabine; and Norman Bilat in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi sounds extremely similar to any of the chance acquaintances he meets on his trip to the Black Sea. There is a strongly urban and international flavour to their use of language which makes for and emphasizes group coherence amongst the young as opposed to the adult world.

This line of thought can be pursued further. Just as there is no effort made to distinguish one young person's speech from that of any other, there is no indication that the individual speaker is concerned to establish nuances or subtle differences between levels

of response. For instance, any of the expressions of praise and approval could, without loss or change of meaning, be exchanged for any other on our list. For, as often as not, it is not the actual meaning of a phrase that matters but its emotive, evaluative, expressive qualities¹¹⁹. This does not, of course, preclude young speakers from having a predilection for certain expressions, which they make liberal use of. Thus, in Die Reise nach Jaroslaw, Gitti's word of highest praise is "cool", while for Petra in Ich fange mit dem Anfang an, this function is given to the term "locker", and Edgar Wibeau in Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. favours "edel".

Writers of 'Jeans Prosa' in general have frequently been criticized for their apparent failure to exploit linguistic diversity for purposes of characterization. In fact, Aksënov was moved by such criticism to rephrase his story "Oranges from Marocco", and to modify his young characters' speech by introducing personal characteristics. This, interestingly, proved to be counterproductive, as the basic opposition between the young and established society lost in sharpness of contour (Flaker 86); which re-enforces the view that the function of jargon in texts of this kind is not to identify characters as individuals but to identify them as members of a clique sharing certain distinctive linguistic features. Flaker states categorically:

... das Verfahren ..., alle jungen Erzähler ohne Rücksicht auf ihre verschiedene soziale und landwirtschaftliche Herkunft sprachlich zu vereinheitlichen, ist sehr charakteristisch für die JP [= Jeans Prosa]. Es ergibt sich aus der Grundopposition, auf der diese Prosa aufgebaut ist, aus der Gegenüberstellung der Welt der Halbwüchsigen zur Welt der Erwachsenen, der Sprache der "Jungen" zur Hochsprache ...

Ein sprachliche Differenzierung innerhalb der Welt der "Jungen" kann für das Grundmodell der JP nicht charakteristisch sein¹²⁰.

The most immediately striking (and perhaps endearing) quality of the language of the young in the texts under discussion are its lively, spontaneous, imaginative, emotional, humorous and even grotesque and drastic features. Expressed in negative terms, this could be described as an absence of objectivity, subtle stylistic qualities, balance, proportion, rationality.

There is also a moral quality involved in this, in that the language of the young is unable to accommodate hypocrisy and dissemblance or to serve as an instrument for the manipulation of other people's beliefs and views.

Drastic phrases and the tendency to exaggerate in young people's speech are related to a sense of awkwardness when it comes to expressing personal feelings. A sense of their own uniqueness and of the considerable significance of their own perceptions and responses is coupled with an inability to give precise expression to what this uniqueness consists in. It is also inseparable from an over-riding desire to be recognizably different from those who make up the established society they are trying to dissociate themselves from.

4.2 The Language of the old

I

In the books under investigation, the main source of linguistic diversity reflecting differences of values and attitudes among social groups is undoubtedly the jargon of the young. However, theirs is not the only mode of speech which is set against standard adult speech; for the old, too, can be seen to use language in their own peculiar way.

In quantitative terms, the contribution made by the old is but a minor one. Some of them are hardly ever quoted in direct speech, others use all words exceedingly sparingly. Yet, the mere fact that their speech does differ from that used by the middle generation against whom the young rebel, is an indication that there is at least one other section of society which has not achieved or is not aiming to achieve complete social integration. It reinforces our impression that there is an instinctive and spontaneous understanding between members of the two age groups, "sozusagen Liebe auf den ersten Blick", as Edgar describes his relationship with Zaremba (89). For the young, the old provide not only a much-needed source of human qualities absent in the bulk of society, especially their parents, but also reassurance that there are alternative values, views and ways of life, which are worth upholding.

II

The mode of speech used by the old is not uniform in the same sense as that of the young. There would be no point in trying to draw up lists of words and phrases common to them all. They do not aim to be part of a clique, there is no suggestion that they see themselves as a group, either at a national or an international level. Yet, in retrospect, their lives can be seen to have followed certain typical patterns so that there is a body of 'group experience': fight against fascism in Spain and Germany, working class background, participation in the building of a new socialist German state, gradual withdrawal to the fringe of society but with no sign of real bitterness. The old are portrayed as individualists who have seen enough of life to know where they want or do not want to go.

All representatives of the old generation use colloquialisms or even dialect forms, that is some kind of non-standard German. This makes for colour, warmth, directness and creates the impression of sincerity.

There is the undiluted Berlin dialect spoken by the old-age pensioner Artur Kraatz in Walther's Zwischen zwei Nächten, largely when talking to his ancient dog Lohengrin:

Also Anstand haste keen, Lohengrin, keen Takt
im Leibe, det merke dir. Redts wohl nich mehr
mit mir? Nu sag een Muks! Nee? Wenn de
nisch sagst, sag ich ooch nisch mehr. Oder
wie't in der Bibel steht: Wer den Wind sät,
ist selber dran schuld ... (133-4).

There is the unashamedly proletarian speech of Otto Maske in Gerisch's Das Jahr und Katrin, formerly resistance fighter in Spain, then lathe operator and now warden of an orphanage ("verdammst noch mal" - "Suff" - "Scheißparkett" - "furztrocken").

There is also Frau Prieselank in Kruschel's Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt whose generous use of colloquialisms ("bettelpatzig" - "meschugge" - "Wurstfinger" - "in die Röhre gucken" - "fies" - "mach nicht solchen Summs") reflects self-irony, humour, common sense and great kindness. Morally, Sabine feels much closer to her than to younger adults. Frau Prieselank understands Sabine's sexual needs and supports her in conducting her life according to her own inner principles and values rather than to bourgeois/socialist morality. Her language becomes unambiguously drastic when she helps Sabine throw out her up-to-then lover Atsche who is beginning to exploit her.

In some cases, light touches of colloquial speech are sufficient indicators of old people's fundamental agreement with youthful thinking. This applies to Tante Anna in Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an. Also to Oma Hela in Schneider's Die Reise nach Jaroslaw whose way of speaking is of immense attraction to her granddaughter Gitti:

Mann, das war Sprache! Das war nicht Sprache,
das war Musik. Das war nicht Musik, das war
großer Auftritt. So wie wenn der berühmte
Rocksänger Jimi [sic] Hendrix seine Gitarre
röhren läßt in seinen größten Momenten (12).

Oma Hela's foreign pronunciation and intonation - "Oma Hela hat
genau so geredet, wie eben Leute aus Jarosław reden" (12) - brings
her closer to Gitti who feels supported in her outsiderdom.

The closeness of the bond between Edgar Wibeau and Zarembo in
Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. is underlined by the observation
that Zarembo, too, refrains from using ordinary standard German.
Edgar himself sets great store by Zarembo's use of "no": "Er
brachte es in jedem Satz mindestens dreimal unter. Der Mann konnte
mit diesem "no" mehr sagen als andere in ganzen Romanen" (94). He
likes hearing Zarembo's "herich" (94) and is impressed with the way
the old worker resolves crises amongst his younger colleagues by
bursting into song rather than admonitory adult talk.

Finally, there is the old narrator in Plenzdorf's Legende ohne Glück
ohne Ende, yet another representative of the non-integrated old
generation whose colloquial speech suggests youthful attitudes, indi-
vidualism, humour, common sense and a directness of response unfettered
by adult moral conventions:

... daß sie ... mit knapp achtzehn das erste Kind
erwischte (10)
er hat sich an sie gehängt (10)
Der Mann war ein gemeiner Kerl (11)
... paßten auf wie die Schießhunde (11)
Ab in den Bau (11)

Er hat sie aufgedonnert (12)
 ... daß die Fetzen flogen (17)
 Wir saßen vor der Röhre (26)
 ... starrte dabei ein Loch in die Wand (28)

III

The bond between the young and the old generation which was found to exist in earlier sections has therefore been established as being reflected in the use of speech by these two groups. Both resort to a language which diverges from standard German as used by the adult establishment, that is the middle generation. Although one would be reluctant to talk about a 'jargon of the old' in analogy to that of the young, there is sufficient evidence that both use speech in such a way as to set themselves apart by resorting to a use of language that is non-conformist, imaginative, emotive, spontaneous as opposed to being conformist, rational, bureaucratic and self-disciplined.

4.3 The language of established society

I

'Standard adult speech' - a phrase used here to designate the language against which the young and, to some degree, the old are setting their mode of speech, is in itself not free from jargon features. Indeed, what the two sub-groups are critical of is not neutral standard German but a language seen to express two features of established society which they reject: namely, (a) moral hypocrisy and (b) the abuse of language as an instrument of manipulation rather than communication. Both are felt to stem from the same underlying intention not to reveal but to conceal meaning, not to cultivate spontaneous and free utterance but to provoke certain calculated responses. It is this aspect of adult speech which is the subject of the analysis below and which can be regarded as yet another facet of the diversity of speech found to be characteristic of East German books of the seventies on young social rebels.

II

Moral hypocrisy is not a feature specifically associated with East German or any other society. It is an attitude which exists everywhere in the world. It thrives best wherever outer compliance with general moral principles is rated more highly than personal honesty and personal commitment to moral values.

Young people, by the very nature of things, react particularly sensitively to any indication that their interlocutors are guided by calculation and dishonesty. The texts analyzed here certainly appear to suggest that the 'young rebels' portrayed are critical of what they feel to reflect such an attitude amongst the adult establishment in their society. Their allies amongst the old generation, though not openly expressing such criticism, are implicitly supportive of it through their behaviour, actions and form of speech.

Young people's awareness of adult moral hypocrisy is clearest in connection with the sphere of sexuality. When Edgar Wibeau describes his father as: "meinen Erzeuger, diesen Schlamper, der soff und der es ewig mit Weibern hatte" (21), he is clearly quoting his mother, the ironical tone implying that he not only doubts the factual truth of the statement but also disapproves of the narrowness of his mother's views; by his standards, she has impoverished her own life and is condemning her husband for not having done the same, which in turn has prevented her from cultivating a frank and sympathetic relationship with her son.

Charlie, Edgar's girlfriend, through her speech betrays signs of being allied to the adult camp, of having been 'aligned'. Instead of acting on her own independent judgment, she hides behind accepted moral and social clichés. When interviewed by Edgar's father, she is intent on stressing the age difference between herself and Edgar (64, 73, 85) and on playing down her involvement with and fascination

?
 for him. She describes him as "ungekämmt und völlig vergammelt" (46), "konfus und schlampig bis dorthinaus" (52), as lacking artistic talent but keen to be considered a genius (49), as "gerissen" (49) and "arbeitsscheu" (56) and forever talking nonsense (57). This description is an attempt to wash her hands of him and to avoid having her own reputation sullied by being associated with him. Although Edgar demonstrates tolerance and generosity by responding to these comments from her not with irony but with understanding: "Du liegst richtig, Charlie. Konfus und schlampig und alles, was du willst" (52), a certain impression of hypocrisy on Charlie's part is inevitable in our, the readers', minds, as we have also witnessed her considerable pleasure in spending time with him whenever this seemed 'safe'.

Hypocrisy and self-righteousness come out strongly in the character of Sabine's mother in Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt, although they are seen as the outcome of weakness rather than ill intent. She lacks the mental powers as well as the education and suitable environment that would have allowed her to learn to form her own views. Instead she merely echoes the hypocrisy of society at large which in her own life is mainly represented by her husband. Comparing herself with her daughter whom (only partly correctly) she suspects of sexual licentiousness, she asserts her own moral superiority:

Ich habe noch nie einen anderen Mann gehabt, und ich will auch keinen anderen haben, ich würde mich direkt ekeln. Sabine soll schon viele gehabt haben ...
 Erichs Vater, dieser würdige Vertreter für Seifen und Parfüm, soll auch närrisch hinter den Mädchen und Frauen hergewesen sein ... (66)

Frau Wulff's hypocrisy springs from anxiety and insecurity. In justifying to herself her unloving treatment of her daughter, she unwittingly uses her husband's terminology and suppresses her spontaneous reactions which she has learnt to consider wrong and immoral:

Immer wieder grübele ich darüber, warum ausgerechnet Sabine, die so selten gelogen hat, so geworden ist, so asozial, wie das heißt. Das Wort hasse ich, asozial, es klingt wie Aussatz.

Natürlich war mein Mann streng zu ihr, das stimmt schon, aber Ordnung muß sein. Als Sabine noch nicht zur Schule ging, verlangte er von ihr, daß sie sauber am Tisch zu sitzen hatte, wenn er nach Hause kam. Er bestimmte die Strafmaßnahmen, ich mußte sie kontrollieren, natürlich, ich war ja zu Hause (62).

Even when she witnesses her husband's insincerity who punishes their daughter for not telling a social lie in order to save her parents' face, she is unable to face the truth, for her own sake or for the sake of her daughter, thus sowing the seed of resistance in her child:

Ich tröstete sie am Abend und sagte: Kinder dürfen nicht vorlaut sein, sie müssen gehorchen. Sie blickte mich groß an und hörte mit einem Male zu weinen auf, das konnte sie nämlich. Sie wolle kein Kind mehr sein, sagte sie, Kinder müßten sich auch wehren können ... (64).

Hence Sabine's determination not to grow up to be like her mother (65).

The most outspoken criticism of adult hypocrisy reflected in their speech occurs in Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an, where moral and ideological hypocrisy are explicitly linked. Petra, the young narrator and protagonist, works in a factory and is appalled by the women's conversations around her. Dirty jokes are as frequent as expressions of self-righteousness. Petra's sympathy goes out to the girl Karin, the only one of them

die aus dem, was sie tat, kein Hehl machte ...
 Sie sagte offen, wenn ihr ein Mann gefiel und
 wenn sie ihn gern im Bett gehabt hätte (84).

She accuses them of wanting fun with men but not admitting to it for fear of marring their public image as "anständige Frauen" (84); of compensating for the absence of personal satisfaction by letting their "schmutzige Phantasie" (91) run riot.

Moral and ideological hypocrisy both inform Frau Klein's speech in the same book. It is interspersed with Party jargon as well as reflecting narrowly bourgeois attitudes:

Sie hielt große Vorträge über Freundschaft zur
 Sowjetunion und sagte im nächsten Augenblick, daß
 man sich die Russenautos nun wirklich nicht kaufen
 könne (87).

She brags about her husband's position and stresses that she would not be working in the factory were it not that she felt obliged to make a contribution towards their purchase of a second family car.

Petra's reaction, "Sie sprach wirklich so" (86-7), is a clear indication of astonishment and even incredulity. Frau Klein delights in scandal stories at the expense of others; she tries to lure young men into the girls' bedroom, calling them "zwei nette Arbeiterjungen, die man nicht vor den Kopf stoßen dürfte" (88).

Petra comments:

Ich dachte, mich haut es um, machte diese Frau aus den zwei Kerlen, die jedes Wochenende an der Saaltür rumlungerten, um was Brauchbares aufzureißen, würdige Vertreter der Arbeiterklasse (88).

III

Bureaucratic jargon, some form of 'officialese', is to be expected to occur in any large administrative organization. Like any other jargon it makes for insiderdom, facilitates one-upmanship, enhances the speaker's sense of self-importance and helps to keep outside interlocutors conveniently ignorant of one's real intentions. It precludes the need for spontaneous expression and minimizes the risks that would be involved in personal commitment and its public display.

The German Democratic Republic is characterized by having a strong bureaucracy, the natural concomitant of strict central planning which allows little room for individual initiative and responsibility. Being indebted to both the traditional Prussian-type bureaucracy and

that evolved by Soviet Communism, there were, from this state's very inception, strong incentives to preserve and cultivate an appropriate jargon, as even a cursory glance at the Party publication Neues Deutschland will confirm.

The existence of such a bureaucratic jargon has been generally acknowledged. Western linguisticians have devoted much effort to its analysis¹²¹. Literary critics have ascertained its infiltration into works of 'Jeans Prosa'. Wolf Oschlies¹²² speaks of "Weihesprache"; Aleksandar Flaker simply refers to it as "bürokratische Sprache"¹²³. Reiner Kunze makes one of his characters draw a distinction between "wie's in der Zeitung steht" and "wie's im Leben ist"¹²⁴.

What is remarkable about this jargon is not so much its existence and scope as such as the degree to which it has penetrated 'ordinary' language, even that of young people. In 1975, Renate Florstedt, editor of the Leipziger Volkszeitung, evaluated an experiment involving contributions from young people to the 'young readers' page', all of which, to her horror, she found written in the same stereotyped language peculiar to the writings of adult journalists:

Wir sehen zwei Ursachen dafür: Zum einen ist die Jugendseite selbst Vorbild für solche Wortarmut, so daß vielleicht manche Jugendliche glauben, an die Zeitung 'müsse' man so und nicht anders schreiben. Zum zweiten sollte der Journalist bei Interviews oder anderen Formen mündlicher Befragung mehr auf die individuellen Eigenarten junger Leute eingehen, und nicht den 'typischen frischen FDJler und sein herzhaftes Pathos' in alles hineinredigieren. Wir

kommen sonst zu einer schablonenhaften Sprache, die die Jugend nicht als ihre erkennt, sondern die westlichen Meinungsmachern Vorschub leistet und ihre Theorien vom Funktionärsjargon, der sich von der Sprache des Volkes unterscheidet, unbeabsichtigt stützt¹²⁵.

In the texts studied here, young people's critical attitude towards East German adult society also finds expression in their highly sensitive reactions to Party language. They come across it daily in newspapers and other mass media, in speeches, pronouncements and Party literature, in dealings with the authorities (above all the police) and, of course, at school, especially in 'Stabü' lessons. Their reactions vary from humour and gentle irony - for instance when poker-faced putting it to good use for their own purposes - to anger at the hypocrisy involved and even open sarcasm and bitterness, if they have first-hand experience of its harmful effects on individuals and society at large.

In Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. Ulrich Plenzdorf, trend-setter here too, uses bureaucratic jargon sparingly and effectively. It informs the prefacing obituaries and newspaper report, with long sentences¹²⁶, and such ironical-sounding clichés as "unser unvergessner Jugendfreund" and "mein lieber Sohn".

In the book, Edgar parodies a film he and his class mates were made to see and comment on, which relied heavily on Party thinking and jargon. The protagonist in the film

kam in eine prachtvolle Brigade mit einem prachtvollen Brigadier, lernte eine prachtvolle Studentin kennen, deren Eltern waren zuerst dagegen, wurden dann aber noch ganz prachtvoll, als sie sahen, was für ein prachtvoller Junge er doch geworden war ... Ich weiß nicht, wer diesen prachtvollen Film gesehen hat, Leute (40-41).

Edgar and his mates, well-trained young Socialists, then complied with official expectations and told the producer

wie hervorragend wir den Film gefunden hätten und was wir alles daraus lernen könnten. Erst sagten alle anwesenden Lehrer und Ausbilder, was wir daraus zu lernen haben, und dann sagten wir, was wir daraus gelernt hatten (42).

Eulogy, not spontaneous and sincere critical comment, is expected of them and eulogy they offer.

Dieter and Addi are two contemporaries of Edgar who are shown to have adopted uncritically the language to match their conformist attitudes. Dieter comments on Edgar's pictures and advises him to abandon abstract art and to focus instead on "das Leben der Bauarbeiter", paying heed to "gewisse Regeln ... Perspektive, Proportionen, Vordergrund, Hintergrund" (75). Addi's naive acceptance of Party thinking and jargon becomes plain in his self-accusations after Edgar's death, whom he describes as "ein wertvoller Mensch" (87):

Wir haben Edgar leider von Anfang an falsch angefaßt, einwandfrei. Wir haben ihn unterschätzt, vor allem ich als Brigadeleiter (87).

Addi does precisely what Edgar himself abhors and is determined to avoid, i.e. to indulge in public self-accusation against his own better judgment. Edgar exposes the hypocritical nature of the language used in these situations at an early point when he himself predicts what a return to Mittenberg would have meant for him:

Leute! Ich hätt mir doch lieber sonstwas abgebissen, als irgendwas zu sülzen von: ich sehe ein ... Ich werde in Zukunft ..., verpflichte mich hiermit ... und so weiter! (15).

The linguistic framework (as the attitude it reflects) is predetermined and provided ready-made, precluding any genuine response on the part of the offender.

More concealed irony directed against bureaucratic jargon must be suspected behind Edgar's use of such ideology-laden expressions as "Pazifist", "Kolchosa" and "Volksbefragung".

Norman Bilal in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi further exploits Edgar's device of contrasting 'normal' everyday speech with the swollen language of journalism. The description of flooding in Rumania is packed with predictable and meaningless adjectives of superlative proportions. It talks of:

sinflutartige Regefälle
 außergewöhnlich rasche Schneeschmelze
 wild schäumende Ströme
 meterhohe Flutwellen
 tobende Wassermassen (15),

with "zehntausende Menschen" responding with "heldenhafter Einsatz"
 in a "weltweite Unterstützungsaktion".

Less proud than Edgar and reacting less irritably to attempts to
 'align' him, Norman feels no qualms in resorting to Party jargon in
 order to manipulate the police into issuing a visa at shortest
 notice. During the weekend preceding the crucial interview with
 the police, Norman spends hours practicing "meine ausgetüftelte
 Rede" (21) in terms of noise level, speed, facial expression and
 vocabulary, following, as he himself cheerfully explains, the golden
 rule of his trade, i.e. "Nicht so genau wie möglich, sondern so genau
 wie nötig". His little speech is carefully interspersed with such
 suggestive phrases as:

Mitglied der dreimal mit dem Staatstitel
 ausgezeichneten Jugendbrigade Patrice Lumumba
 numerisch gesteuerte Werkzeugmaschinen
 Partnerbrigade
 Erfahrungsaustausch
 sozialistische Integration
 Planerfüllung

leaving his interlocutor defenceless and in no position to reject a
 request which appears to be so totally in compliance with Party
 requirements.

Norman Bilat, though occasionally tugging a little in a different direction, does on the whole, by conviction, toe the Party line. If, in his parting words to the seductive Shireen from Holland, he sums up his own ideological position in a declaration of love for his own society, and calls this declaration an overfulfilment, "vorfristig und freiwillig", of his "Jahresplan an Vaterlandslob" (141), his tone is only mildly tongue-in-cheek.

Sharper criticism of official cliché language to match cliché views comes from Petra, the young protagonist in Schreiter's Ich fange mit dem Anfang an. It relates mainly to the school situation where essays in German are judged as to their underlying ideological attitudes and where the girl is testing her strength against a teacher whose views on what a good essay should contain are clear-cut and unambiguous. While the others in the class, "eine Herde kleiner Heuchler" (75), unquestioningly conform with what is expected of them in order to secure good marks, waffling about: "großes Vorbild, Heldentum, nacheifern, Lehren ziehen und so weiter" (76), Petra, like Edgar, refuses to do so and accordingly ends up with

in Form eine Eins, im Ausdruck eine Eins und im Inhalt eine Drei minus. Dazu in roter Tinte der Satz: Ich weiß nicht, wieso Sie in Staatsbürgerkunde eine Eins auf dem Zeugnis haben!!! Drei Ausrufungszeichen. Ungelogen (76).

Petra hates this teacher whose resistance to questions of any kind and predilection for unambiguous answers is reflected in her stereotyped manner of speaking:

Prinzipiell war ihr Lieblingswort, und sie maß jede Antwort an der Grundfrage, die klar sein müßte (76).

By far the most outspoken and unconcealed criticism of ideological jargon comes from Paul in Plenzdorf's Legende vom Glück ohne Ende. Paul has had ample opportunity to assess the effect of this jargon on his own person and to reflect on its origins, nature and objectives. His comments, in which he moves from implicit irony to open sarcasm, are rendered verbatim by the elderly narrator.

Paul once went through the phase when he tried to live up to the actual meaning behind the cliché words commonly used by official organs: He tried to create the ideal family by turning his wife, the ignorant, beautiful girl from the fun fair, into the "reizende junge Gattin", "ausgezeichnete Gastgeberin", "aufopferungsvolle Mutter" (19); he trained to be the "junger, aufstrebender, bei aller Dynamik und Kritikfreudigkeit doch prinzipienfester Kader ..., der die besten Hoffnungen rechtfertigte und seinem Chef unentbehrlich war" (19); and he devised a comprehensive plan for shaping his non-conformist lover Paula into "eine richtige, anständige, gebildete Konformistin" (41). At this time he was still capable of uttering ideological clichés in order to cover up contradictions and abuses in society. Statements such as: "Niemand sagt, daß wir im Kommunismus leben, sondern in einer Übergangsphase" (35), or "Dir fehlt der Überblick" (35) as well as the timely use of the word "noch" (36) came to him easily then and effectively cut off any further argument with Paula.

However, following his own 'conversion' to Paula's non-conformism, Paul's comments on officialese of all brands increasingly acquire a sarcastic note, as his awareness of the abuse of language for purposes other than communication grows: There is military jargon ("die Feindlage" (48), "Feindeinsicht" (49), "Feindbild" (51)), which appears ridiculous once he has ceased to take the whole manoeuver situation seriously; there is the bureaucratic jargon which serves the cowardly pub-owner to prevent his guests from enjoying themselves and actually communicating with each other:

Das Zusammenstellen von Tischen zwecks Bildung größerer Publikumsgruppen ist höflich aber bestimmt zu unterbinden(149).

And there is the mixture of Christian and authoritarian cliché phrases used by the warden of the cemetery who finds it difficult to put up with visitors who fail to conform to the pattern of behaviour normally displayed by mourners:

Paul konnte sich erinnern, daß in seiner Rede die Worte Pietät, heilige Ruhe, deutsche Friedhofsordnung, Ausweis und Polizei vorgekommen sind (169).

Jargon invades Paul's life wherever it is not sheltered by Paula's presence and spirit; wherever it appears it reflects conformism and suppressed individuality. The flat Laura furnishes to her own taste (a taste which merely copies the officially approved) could have served, it seems to Paul in retrospect, "als Beispiel für die Leistungsfähigkeit der modernen Wohnkultur" (199), just as his

children are squeezed into "kindgemäße Kleidung" (203) and he himself acquires a life style governed by "Regelmäßigkeit" (217). Jargon pursues him to his otherwise sheltered place of work in the supermarket: There, a "Betrieb" is referred to as a "gesellschaftlicher Bedarfsträger", "Sahne" as "Milchfett", a "Kiesfuhre" as "Erdstofftransport" (157). It even enters his love life when a potentially simple "yes" from Laura comes out as "daß Paul 'grundsätzlich davon ausgehen kann' that she wants him" (220).

Paul's and Laura's "Dienststelle", obviously a hive of bureaucracy and Party loyalty, change their jargon in tune with general and particular fashions. Paul revels in detailed lists of 'in' and 'out' words and phrases:

Es soll nicht mehr angezeigt gewesen sein, die Worte relativ, evident, allergisch, substantiell, freundschaftlich und also zu benutzen. Gefragt dagegen sollen gewesen sein: essentiell, signifikant, brüderlich, locker, autophil, feminin, diametral und antithetisch, aber diametral um Himmels willen nicht mehr zusammen mit entgegengesetzt. Im Kommen soll gewesen sein: kontrovers, konsumtiv, auch wieder kollektiv, nominell, national und produktiv. Produktiv aber nur mit langem gerolltem R. Im übrigen soll er gesagt haben, daß letztere Vokabeln zunächst noch in mehreren Spitzenreferaten bestätigt werden müßten (234).

Paul's sarcasms directed at bureaucratic and Party jargon culminate in his attacks on journalese. They extend over no less than two pages and contain an unqualified condemnation: No newspaper report, so Paul claims, with the sole exception of obituaries and car adverts, can ever be relied upon to correspond to the facts:

Wenn einer seinen Wartburg dreihundertelf verkaufen will, dann will er ihn auch verkaufen, oder wenn Erna Schulze mit sechs- undsiebzig Jahren gestorben ist, dann ist sie es auch. Aber wenn da steht, der und der hat den und den zu einem Gespräch empfangen, wer sagt mir, daß es wirklich so gewesen ist und nicht vielleicht umgekehrt? Die Zeitung nicht (42).

And even an obituary's information content may well be limited to not much more than the fact that someone has actually died, as demonstrated by the obituary he recalls having envisaged for himself before he experienced his 'conversion':

Nach kurzer schwerer Krankheit verstarb unerwartet im Alter von sechsundvierzig Jahren unser bewährter Direktor, mein treusorgender Gatte, mein vorbildlicher Vater, der Träger hoher staatlicher Auszeichnungen, Paul und so weiter (26).

According to Paul, the only profitable way of reading an East German newspaper is to read between the lines, to sense what has failed to be printed, to develop a nose for subtle terminological differences due to usage rather than actual differences in meaning (e.g. between "entfaltet" and "entwickelt" (43)) and to learn to gauge the significance of inverted commas. He concludes that, ultimately, newspapers are used to prescribe and manipulate, to conceal and distort, to cover up the non-existence of self-determination on the part of the people and the rule of the principle of "hier die Regierenden und dort das Volk, das mitmachen darf" (43).

IV

To sum up, then, the introduction of bureaucratic, Party and other forms of jargon can be seen to be another facet of what has been described as the linguistic diversity in the 'Jeans Prosa' genre in general and the respective East German works of the seventies in particular.

What are the general characteristics of adult jargon?

To begin with, there appears to be a preference for the weighty, the pompous, the complex phrase rather than the simple, 'ordinary' one ("gesellschaftlicher Bedarfsträger" rather than "Betrieb"); also a penchant for the emphatic, the superlative, the elevated or even elated form, frequently reflected in long and compound adjectives/adverbs ("prachtvoll", "hervorragend", "weltweit", "heldenhaft") and found in stereotyped combinations ("prinzipienfest" to go with "Kader"; "heldenhaft" with "Einsatz" etc.). There is little evidence of analysis, reflection or self-criticism in a style largely geared towards self-eulogy and self-congratulation. We are struck by the absence of any lightness, elegance or flexibility of style, which can partly be accounted for by excessively long nominal compounds ("Gattinnenkleid", "Personenkreisfrage"). Little store is set by original or witty presentation, with clichés holding undisputed sway. Military terms in non-military contexts ("Aussaatkampagne", "Partnerbrigade") introduce a flavour of rigour and discipline, while frequent abbreviations and acronyms convey the

impression that one needs to be an insider to understand what is said ("Der Rstrltr. u.d. Ltr. HdL. .Vrsrg.")¹²⁷.

All of these features can be said to be diametrically opposed to those found to be characteristic of the speech typically associated with the young rebel or even his allies amongst the old generation.

4.4 The failure of verbal language

I

Recourse on the part of the young protagonists (and their allies amongst the old generation) to their own mode of speech has been explained as primarily an act of resistance to and detachment from the language associated with established adult society, the latter being felt to be unsuitable for spontaneous, sincere and direct expression. Given that adult speech, in its hypocritical and manipulatory form, is increasingly infiltrating everyday speech and that there is hardly an area of expression left which has not, in one way or another, been affected by this process, the logical conclusion to be drawn is either not to use (verbal) language at all but to communicate by non-verbal means, or to cease communicating altogether.

II

Non-verbal communication, as an ultimate mode of diversity of expression, is restricted to Plenzdorf's texts. We find it in his early work, Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., as well as in the two versions of the story of Paul and Paula, i.e. in 'Filmerzählung' and in the novel Legende vom Glück ohne Ende.

To begin with Edgar Wibeau: It strikes us that although he cannot be said to fail to communicate with other, like-minded characters in the book, he hardly uses with them the jargon he applies so extensively in addressing his audience/readers. Communication with literary allies rather tends to rely on 'body language'¹²⁸. It would appear that in doing so he expresses a distrust of verbal (and especially of conceptual) language as the product of the intellect which he has come to see as intent on manipulating people's minds and attitudes. By way of contrast, body language is incapable of being any other than spontaneous, unambiguous and direct.

In Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. the circle of those resorting to non-verbal language includes Edgar, Charlie and Zaremba (as well as possibly Edgar's father's girl-friend); in Legende vom Glück ohne Ende the 'initiated' comprise, beside Paul and Paula, Paula's children, Paul's first wife, Paula's former lover Collie, also the other (mainly elderly) inhabitants in the Singer Strasse and, indeed, 'the people' at large, e.g. Paula's colleagues and customers in the store.

Happiness, inner and outer harmony, tend to be expressed by them through music, preferably in conjunction with dancing. On dancing to music made by Africans - obviously intended to represent a race amongst whom spontaneous, unalienated self-expression is still the norm - Edgar feels "high" (59). Looking back on his first week in Berlin, he sees his life there "wie in einem Strom von Musik" (60), when he needed little more than "Musik und Milch" (61). Making love

to Charlie, he would like to burst into song, recalling a book where "ein Neger, also ein Afrikaner, nach Europa kommt und wie er seine erste weiße Frau kriegt. Er fängt an zu singen, irgendeinen Song von sich zu Hause" (134). The association of music and dancing with genuine self-expression and communication - the ideal as opposed to reality - comes out more clearly still in the later novel. Paul's first wife, having resisted all Paul's efforts to "tame" her (64), to his utter amazement shows herself to be a perfect dancer (never having been taught to dance) and capable of carrying on a conversation with an African guest (whose language she never learnt). Her bond with her lover, Collie, is their shared love of dancing. When Edgar sings, words are of little or no significance, as in his 'jeans song'. What matters is the rhythm, the harmony of body and soul. Like Paula he knows (but Paul only begins to learn) "daß ein zwingender Grund vorlag, wenn sein Körper nicht das tat, was Paul wollte" (252).

Communication through non-verbal channels is an art mastered especially by Zaremba, who has managed to reduce his verbal utterances to an absolute minimum. His "no" (94), which so deeply impresses Edgar, is all he normally requires in order to supplement his non-verbal means of communication, ranging from singing (90), dancing (89) and clownish acts (89), to love-making (90). Zaremba alone sees through Edgar's concealment strategy which makes him resort to self-induced coughing fits at socially sensitive moments: "Ahoi! Hast auch schon mal besser gehustet, no?" (111).

Body signals are used extensively between Edgar and Charlie. There are Charlie's eyes (50-1, 67, 134), her peculiar way of lifting her skirt before sitting down (67, 121), her sudden flushing and pallor (71, 83, 119, 121) - all of them directly and unambiguously meaningful to Edgar. Charlie, in turn, requires no verbal comment from Edgar to know how much he hates Dieter's attitude to life: "Dabei hatte ich den Mund nicht einmal aufgemacht" (80).

In Legende (both versions), Paula communicates largely without words. If she does use them, they tend to be drastic, very clear, very personal, always to the point, avoiding cliché and circumlocution. With the deepening of her experience, words become more and more dispensable; she speaks through her body, her whole being. Her non-verbal messages range from physical violence (e.g. when, in the film story, she throws her lover out (22-3)) and the ostentatious opening of doors (153, 177, 184), to smiles and the creation and display of beautiful clothes designed by herself for herself. Her smiles are catching: Edgar is found smiling on talking to her after her death (without words) (170); when Paul gets divorced from his first wife, smiles spread to include even the court officials (147-8).

But what about Paul's language, which ought, after all, to be particularly revealing as he is the only protagonist in the book to undergo an inner development? We found that Paul's early (realistic) phase of unthinking, servile acceptance of the values and standards of his surroundings, finds expression in his speech - especially clearly so in the 'Filmerzählung' because of the direct speech used

there: he avoids spontaneous utterances and prefers to rely on clichés (14), the brash jargon of the successful careerist (26), polite-sounding untruths (37) and lame excuses in officialese (63). It is only when he risks being himself that he develops his own form of expression; this also means that he resorts more to body language (culminating in the siege of Paula's flat and the smashing of her door with an axe). After that event, he is unable to take further refuge in borrowed phrases. As the narrator puts it: "Paul war nicht mehr der Mensch, der solche Sätze [empty phrases] sagen konnte" (151).

Thus, those characters in Plenzdorf's texts who are painfully aware of the discrepancies between their ideals and the reality around them, display an inclination to resort to body language in order to communicate with other literary characters.

III

Total non-communication as the ultimate conclusion drawn from an essential distrust of all forms of language is not met with in any of the texts considered here. Given that this would have represented a shattering indictment of the society concerned, total non-communication would in any case not be a phenomenon one could expect to find in a text published in the G.D.R. Yet it would seem legitimate to point to one East German book, where this

extreme conclusion is reached, albeit outside the 'Jeans Prosa' context. (Needless to say, the book has been unpublishable in the G.D.R.).

In Karl-Heinz Jakobs' novel Wilhelmsburg three characters actually withdraw totally into silence and non-communication: Firstly, the protagonist Walter Blach, who, having mastered numerous languages but having used none of them in order to stand up publicly to his convictions, ends up in a West German lunatic asylum and, on returning to East Germany, ceases to talk altogether (272). Secondly, his daughter, whose letters to public personalities and organizations, ranging from the President of the United States to the United Nations Organization, remain unanswered, achieves total silence by committing suicide. Finally, a third character in the book, Blach's friend Samuel, retreats into the seclusion of an old house in the middle of a wilderness where weary of the world he talks to nobody but himself and the stars:

Mir dröhnen die Ohren von all den Beteuerungen in den letzten siebentausend Jahren, daß hier und heute eine neue Epoche in der Geschichte der Menschheit begonnen habe. Die Kulturgeschichte dieser Beteuerungen, das wäre eine Buch, das einer endlich schreiben sollte (24).

4.5 The language of literary models

I

A chapter on the diversity of language in East German 'Jeans Prosa' novels would be incomplete without some attempt to describe the influence of literary models on the language used in them. This must be of particular importance in the light of the fact that, as Flaker has shown, 'Jeans Prosa' as a genre is an international one and authors engaged in writing such works, must, by definition, be aware of previous contributions to the field.

We have, in earlier chapters (2.4.1 and 3) had occasion to touch upon the use of literary models in the context of characterization and structure, that is literary models adopted by the young protagonists themselves. Regarding characterization, Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. proved to be the only text where the protagonist's attitude towards such a model could be described as 'dynamic' rather than 'static'; that is as the only text where the young person uses his model as more than merely a source of moral support but retains sufficient detachment from it to allow for a process of changing awareness and changing attitudes.

Structurally too, Plenzdorf's work was found to be the exception rather than the rule in that the literary models resorted to by him and his protagonist are used to make a positive contribution towards greater complexity and enrichment of the text.

Looking at the contribution made by literary models to the language of the texts under consideration, we shall once again have to draw a distinction between Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. and all others. Not that no other book draws on the linguistic resources already available in other works on young rebels against established society; but that after the appearance of Plenzdorf's text and the unprecedented attention it received from all quarters (obviously fellow-writers included), this text itself took on the function of a model which no East German book of the genre could afford to ignore. In how far Edgar Wibeau's advice for young readers was taken, i.e. to lay their hands on any copy of Salinger's book they could find and not to let go of it again, must remain a subject for speculation. What is certain, is that the only original adaptation of Catcher in the Rye to the German scene is that by Plenzdorf.

II

Edgar Wibeau (and his author) can be said to have two literary models: Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werthers and Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye, with the former perhaps more appropriately called an 'anti-model', in that its language serves rather as a foil than an object for imitation (however qualified). Both sources are exploited in an imaginative and original manner, and both are put to very different use.

Edgar's initial reaction to Goethe's language is, as already noted, one of total rejection: "Leute! war das ein Krampf! ... Ich kam einfach nicht mit dieser Sprache zu Rande" (58), and "Leute, das konnte wirklich kein Schwein lesen" (36). However, rejection soon turns into qualified appreciation, indeed, fascination. His own experience of being confused and intrigued give Edgar the idea of the "Werther-Pistole" (100, 114), in order to confuse and intrigue others. His own attitude to the text remains ambiguous, the ambiguity being partly attributable to the differences in character between himself and Werther, but largely to the differences in the quality and use of language. As Edgar is unaware of the time gap that separates his speech from Werther's, his approach to Goethe's language is a-historical, which increases the sense of alienation on his part. Edgar feels irritated by the sentimental quality of Werther's style: "Das wimmelte nur so von Herz und Seele und Glück und Tränen" (37); he is amused by its pompous and fustian tone: "Die Grenzen der Menschheit, unter dem machte es Old Werther nicht" (82). He is puzzled by old-fashioned terms ("Base", "Narr", "meine Beste") and nominal forms ("zum Wohle", "zum Vorteile", "beim Empfang") and can hardly appreciate the change of meaning undergone by some of the words he finds in Goethe ("merkwürdiger Bösewicht").

Syntactically, Werther's language is complex, balanced, aesthetically refined, meant to be read by literary gourmets with plenty of leisure time at their disposal. Edgar, who is addressing a totally different audience, can learn only from contrastive and not from imitative experience.

The second literary model (again for both author and protagonist) is Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye, by 1972 a standard model for works of 'Jeans Prosa' in countries of Eastern Europe¹²⁹. Its function for the East German story is totally different from that of Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werthers.

Plenzdorf knew Heinrich Böll's German translation of Salinger's book (which came out in 1965 in both Germanies), and it is likely that he had access to the American original, which in 1968 also appeared in Moscow¹³⁰. Although Brenner¹³¹ states categorically, "die englische Fassung hat im übrigen für Plenzdorf keine Rolle gespielt", even a cursory glance at the three texts leaves no doubt that, in general 'feel' as well as in detail, Edgar Wibeau's jargon is very much closer to that of the American Holden than to that of his Böllian counterpart. A few illustrations might be helpful¹³².

Like Salinger, Plenzdorf favours a paratactic sentence structure and simple verb forms, modelled on spoken rather than written language. This is reflected for instance in his avoidance of the subjunctive in indirect speech. When Edgar reports on responses made by himself or others, he either uses direct speech:

Da sagte ich ihr auf den Kopf zu: Das ist doch Ihr
eigenes Geld.
Von wegen Honorar!
Dann fiel ihr ein: Schon. Aber ich krieg's wieder (53),

or simply replaces a subjunctive form by an indicative one: "Außerdem

sagte ich ihr die ganze Zeit, daß sie mir ungeheuer was sein konnte"(53). Böll, on the other hand, does use subjunctive forms in reported speech, even, as in the example given here, the 'literary' sounding subjunctive of the present rather than the imperfect tense: "Sie hatte einmal zu Sally gesagt, ich sei haltlos und hätte keine feste Lebensrichtung" (46), as a rendering of Salinger's "She once told Sally I was wild. She said I was wild and that I had no direction in life" (63).

Like The Catcher in the Rye, Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. is full of repetitions of words as well as longer phrases. In this way, a network of recurrent motifs and language signals is built up which contributes to the structure and the meaning of the texts.

Plenzdorf: "Das war ich. Leute, war ich vertriebt. Ich war ganz hervorragend vertriebt. Ich sah nichts. Ich triefte auf mein Plumpsklo" (46). Holden Caulfield's repetitive form of speech: "I hate saying corny things ... But when I'm with someone that's corny, I always act corny, too" (64), is transformed by Böll into: "Solche Ausdrücke wie ... sind mir zwar verhaßt, aber wenn ich mit einem groben Menschen zu tun habe, benehme ich mich entsprechend"(47).

Linguistic imagination, evident in the wealth of often drastic metaphors, similes and near-synonyms has been seen to be a feature of Plenzdorf's text. It is a feature shared by The Catcher in the Rye, but sadly absent in the German translation where the language tends to be flat and colourless: Salinger: "I was going to quit horsing around with girls that, deep down, gave me a pain in the ass" (66). Böll:

" ... keinen Blödsinn mehr mit Mädchen zu machen, die ich im Grunde nicht gern hatte" (49).

Slang, the outstanding feature of both the American and the East German language, tends to be replaced by somewhat stilted adult language in Böll: Salinger: "What 're ya tryna do, bud? Kid me?", Böll: "Was soll denn das bedeuten? Wollen Sie mich zum Narren halten?" (47).

The adjective "old" in connection with proper names, usually in a sympathetic context, is used by Salinger and Plenzdorf, but eliminated in Böll's translation. The same applies to the protagonist's direct form of address in turning to the reader/audience and to the implicative phrase "and all" used by both Salinger and Plenzdorf but not by Böll.

To sum up, Ilse H. Reis' conclusion: "Bölls Ausdrucksweise ist jedenfalls konventioneller als die Plenzdorfs"¹³³, appears as something of an understatement. An influence of Salinger's jargon of the kind suggested by these few examples on Plenzdorf is almost inconceivable without some familiarity on his part with the American original. Edgar's passing comment on Böll's translation of the book's title might well be interpreted so as to apply to other areas as well:

Laßt euch nicht vom Titel täuschen. Ich gebe zu, er popt nicht besonders, vielleicht ist er schlecht übersetzt, aber egal (38).

5 CONCLUSION: THE REBEL IN JEANS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

I

Frictions between young people and the society they live in are the theme common to all works considered here. But, of course, not to them alone. What distinguishes them from all others, are two characteristics: Firstly, problems with reality result in escape from it (be it only temporary). Secondly, characterization, narrative perspective, structure and, most importantly, language display certain identifiable collective patterns.

Escape we have found to come in two forms. Either (that is in Plenzdorf's texts) it is unambiguous and of indefinite duration, without any indication as to how the existing discrepancies between the protagonist's Utopia and social reality might be solved. For Plenzdorf's characters the gulf separating them from established society is unbridgeable and a compromise inconceivable. Unless reality itself changes to accommodate the rebellious individual, frictions will, if anything, increase.

Or (as in all other works) the escape may be a temporary one, a sort of holiday from reality, leading ultimately to acquiescence and acceptance of compromise. The young rebel learns to adjust to the requirements of society and reconciles himself to the necessity of social integration. By implication, any instance of non-integration in these works is seen as resulting from a combination of

unfortunate circumstances and character weaknesses of that particular person, which call for strict disciplinary action on the part of society.

The young rebel as a literary figure has been seen to display a set of predictable characteristics: He is likely to be a bright, idealistic, sociable, sexually uninhibited and self-confident youngster who at least for a time chooses to reject academic and career success in favour of a life pattern to suit his own needs. He has little patience with his parents and their generation whom he regards as materialistic, overambitious in career terms, lacking individuality, human warmth, imagination and a wide-ranging experience of life and the world. He is likely to experience confrontations not only with his parents but also with others in authority - teachers, the police, Party functionaries. However, in no case do these confrontations escalate to open hostility. They always remain contained within the framework of 'non-antagonistic problems', and therefore satisfy Honecker's proviso governing the abolition of taboos, i.e. that the strong socialist position must needs remain unqueried.

The young, so we found, have allies amongst the old with whom they share a mutual sense of elective affinity. Both groups exist on the fringe of society if not in opposition to it, both share a common system of values contrasting with that propagated by the establishment. Interestingly, nostalgia seems stronger in the young than in the old.

The young 'rebel in jeans' is keen to express his opposition in certain conspicuous and easily identifiable ways, such as hair-style, clothes, leisure-time activities, musical and other artistic tastes and youth jargon. These are for him forms of self-expression. But they are also an expression of conformity with the requirements of youth-subculture and therefore evidence of stylization rather than of spontaneity.

The narrative perspective in these books tends to be subjective, typically that of the young protagonist himself, in some cases supplemented by other subjective points of view. The device of the omniscient narrator who provides an objective set of values is often dispensed with. Of course, absence of objectivity is not exclusive to this type of fiction but is a prominent feature of many works of the seventies. Indeed, the real breakthrough occurred with the appearance of Christa Wolf's Nachdenken über Christa T. in 1968, where for the first time in East German literature the reader was left with no means to decide what 'really' happened¹³⁴.

In structural terms, 'Jeans Prosa' cannot lay claim to particular originality, as the well-tried 'Bildungsroman' pattern proved perfectly adequate to accommodate its needs. It was only in the case of Plenzdorf's texts that this pattern needed major modification. As Plenzdorf's protagonists reject integration and compromise, his books become 'Anti-Bildungsromane'.

The hero is not shown to modify his views through wider experience but to adhere to them, come what may. Instead of looking out into his future we have before us an indefinite extension of the present.

Lastly, 'Jeans Prosa' works share a common approach to language. Social and moral differences are reflected in a diversity of forms of speech, with the young sharing their own particular jargon. It is in this area in particular that Ulrich Plenzdorf and his disciples can be said to have made a genuine contribution to East German literature, as no model existed previous to 1971. It is here too where they drew inspiration from the international scene - in itself a noteworthy step to have taken.

II

Shortcomings of society and the absence of harmony between young people's ideals and social reality is a grievance shared by many young literary figures in East German fiction of the seventies. The typical representative of the 'jeans generation' chooses escape as his way out of the dilemma. But in scanning other texts of the same decade, at least five other alternatives are represented.

To begin with, there is the well-tried teacher-pupil story, such as Wolfgang Joho's Der Sohn, Nachrichten aus der Bender-Welt¹³⁵, Günter Görlich's Eine Anzeige in der Zeitung¹³⁶ and Erik Neutsch's Zwei leere Stühle¹³⁷ which read like the teachers' response, soul-searching

and well-meaning, to the Edgar-Wibeau syndrome in their schools. They share with works of 'Jeans Prosa' their reliance on the structural pattern of the 'Bildungsroman'/investigative novel: A crisis has occurred in a school, its background is unravelled, and lessons are learnt by all involved. However, the narrative perspective is always that of an older and wiser person, sympathetic to the young people's criticism of their social environment but unquestioningly committed to the social and political system as such: a "Chronist" (Joho), a deputy head (Görlich) or a headmaster (Neutsch). The 'correct', i.e. socialist perspective is never lost sight of for a moment. Nor is the language used in any original way; young people's speech remains untapped and the overall tone matches the didactic intentions of the narrator: The young rebels are talked about rather than allowed to speak up for themselves. These novels were generally welcomed by East German critics as a valuable contribution towards the bringing about of a more self-critical attitude on the part of adults in charge of young people. Thus Hans Richter's review in Volkswacht of Görlich's book ends:

Das Buch regt den aufmerksamen Leser an, sich und seine Umgebung mit wachenden Sinnen zu prüfen. Es hilft jene menschlichen Potenzen aufdecken, die wir freisetzen müssen, um dem Leben auch wirklich alles das abzugewinnen, was es gerade in unserer sozialistischen Welt an objektiven Möglichkeiten bietet. "Eine Anzeige in der Zeitung" sollte von vielen gelesen und erlebt, nachgefühlt und bedacht werden. Und mehr Bücher aus solcher Haltung und solchem Geist wünschen wir uns von unseren Schriftstellern im nächsten Jahr¹³⁸.

And Klaus Höpcke, in a review of the same book in Neues Deutschland leads up to the final verdict:

Wie sparsam die Striche, so aufregend der Konflikt, den der Autor aufbricht. Das starke Echo, welches das Buch auszulösen verspricht, hat guten Grund¹³⁹.

This heart-warming reception was not given to any of the remaining texts about the young, the majority of whom moved very near to or even crossed the boundaries of tolerance acceptable to East German censors.

As a first group, one might mention texts where youngsters are portrayed as unthinkingly accepting 'alignment' since it promotes their chances of advancement in society. Dieter in Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. is an obvious example of this species. There are the school-children in Jurek Becker's novel Schlaflose Tage¹⁴⁰ who are unwilling or unable to think for themselves and then act on their convictions. Erich Loest's story "Eine Falte spinnwebfein"¹⁴¹ describes a fourteen-year-old girl in the process of taking the first step towards 'alignment'. Reiner Kunze's "Friedenkinder"¹⁴² are products of a consistent policy of preventing independent thought on the part of children and young people. Maxi Wander's collection of recorded interviews Guten Morgen, du Schöne. Frauen in der DDR¹⁴³ contains some very moving examples of young people, weighed down by a sense of malaise, but unable to identify its causes, and therefore ultimately prepared to accept things as they are. "Gabi A., 16, Schülerin", for instance, expresses total disillusionment about her

life, but she nevertheless sums it up like this:

Besonderen Wunsch hab ich sonst keinen. Ich bin eigentlich einverstanden mit allem. So wie jetzt möchte ich weiterleben. Ob ich die Welt verändern will? Nein, das kann ich ja nicht. Warum soll ich was wollen, was ich nicht kann? Man paßt sich unwillkürlich an (151).

Secondly, there are the young characters who can be described as victims; they stand no chance of self-development and self-fulfilment. Their society is not such as to make allowances for the disadvantaged among its members, no matter whether their disadvantages are ideological, social, physical, psychological or mental. These young people tend to remain helplessly passive, with dreams and flights of imagination providing occasional relief. They are the scapegoats of a society that is, at best, self-centred and indifferent, and brutally aggressive at worst. They suffer from claustrophobia and social isolation (which can even manifest itself in loss of speech); they spend their time drifting restlessly and aimlessly through society, through the streets of Berlin or even through the country at large, unable to find a corner where they do not feel threatened. The texts frequently end with the young person's death, whether from suicide or brutal murder, when he has been hunted down and death is the only remaining solution.

These texts include Klaus Schlesinger, "Neun. Skizze"¹⁴⁴, Reiner Kunze, "Element"¹⁴⁵, Hans Joachim Schädlich, "Nirgendwo ein Ort" (1971), "Unter den achtzehn Türmen der Maria vor dem Teyn" (1971) and "Teile der Landschaft" (1975)¹⁴⁶, Joachim Walther, "R. und J.

auf dem Dorfe im Bezirk Postdam"¹⁴⁷, and Thomas Brasch, "Fliegen im Gesicht"¹⁴⁸. None of these has ever been accepted for publication in the German Democratic Republic, although at least two of the authors (Plenzdorf and Walther) are still resident there.

Another variant of the victim is sixteen-year-old Stefan Roth in Rolf Scheider's novel November¹⁴⁹ who, following a road accident, undergoes a psychological crisis. He is unable to cope with it himself, is totally without help from others and is left in a state which Karin, in Volker Braun's Unvollendete Geschichte¹⁵⁰, describes as "Selbstmord nicht des Körpers sondern des Denkens" (93), i.e. an abnegation of all spontaneous feeling and thought. Unvollendete Geschichte itself offers a case of a passive victim, Karin's friend Frank; he is driven into attempted suicide and merely escapes from it because of the moral support provided by his mother and Karin.

Thirdly, there is the young political opponent who risks everything in his fight against ideological and political suppression. Texts of this kind tend to be autobiographical reports by authors who had to leave the country and now live in the Federal Republic where their texts were first published. Here we could mention Gerald K. Zschorsch's collection of short texts Glaubt bloß nicht, daß ich traurig bin¹⁵¹, Thomas Auerbach's anthology DDR-konkret, Geschichten und Berichte aus einem real existierenden Land¹⁵⁶ and Siegmund Faust's recent book In welchem Lande lebt Mephisto? Schreiben in Deutschland¹⁵³.

To conclude, consideration must be given to the author who, alongside Plenzdorf, has made the most important contribution to East German literature on the young: Volker Braun. There are his Kast stories, three written in the fifties and sixties but first published in 1972¹⁵⁴, and the fourth "Die Tribüne", written in 1974 and published in both German states in 1979¹⁵⁵. And there is also Unvollendete Geschichte¹⁵⁶.

In one sense, the Kast stories do not seem to fit in under the heading of 'young literary figures of the seventies', as the protagonist's youth falls into the two earlier decades. In another sense, they are nevertheless relevant, as Kast's incorruptible idealism and the problems this causes him remain substantially unchanged when, in the seventies, he reaches middle-age. He is still tormented by the ever increasing gulf separating socialist ideals and socialist practice in his country, still filled with the determination not to capitulate but to struggle on, still burning with the desire to help to modify reality to approach the ideal. The middle-aged Kast does, in the end, succumb to despair and the temptation to resign and dive away under the waves ("zurückziehn, wegtauchen unter den Wogen", 182). But only after having tried everything in his power to change things for the better.

Eighteen-year-old Karin in Unvollendete Geschichte experiences similar problems, though in her case the realization that socialist society is still far removed from the ideal it was founded on is not a gradual

one but takes the form of a sudden shock. This shock brings about a crisis of identity affecting even the deepest layers of her personality. Like Kast, she is totally thrown back upon herself. At one point she suspects herself of turning into an existential crisis what is no more than a common problem experienced by young people who have pitched their ideals too high:

Vielleicht war das kein Fall, der in ein bestimmtes Kapitel der Geschichtsbücher gehörte, sondern sie erlebte nur zwingender, als Schock, was jedem Aufwachsenden geschieht, wenn er seine hochdampfenden Vorstellungen von der neuen Gesellschaft zu Wasser werden sieht. Wenn er sich endlich in die Möglichkeiten zwingt (94).

Yet we know from the intensity of her emotions and commitment that the answer will not lie in her gently accommodating herself to the existing state of affairs, cutting her ideals down to size to fit into the rigid framework of reality. Like Kast, she will continue to struggle, whatever the outcome. Like Kast - and like Goethe's Werther - she will not cease to suffer from the painful awareness "daß da ein Riß durch die Welt ging, und durch ihn Werther selbst" (45). As she is young and strong and has a responsibility towards her child about to be born as well as its father, she succeeds in overcoming the "exotische Versuchung - sich vom gesellschaftlichen Leben abzuwenden, ihre Ideale zu vergessen, ihre Aufgaben wegzuwerfen" (91). The story ends with Karin ready to face life and its "andere Geschichten".

Braun's young protagonist of the seventies (Karin) is essentially struggling with the same problems as his young protagonist of the fifties and sixties (Kast). They both share a high seriousness which excludes any humour, irony or parody. Braun's language is forceful, very personal, occasionally idiosyncratic, compressing intense emotion and dialectic thought into a language characterized by economy and conciseness. The narrative never drifts, tension is never relaxed. Writing is an act of preserving or regaining one's inner balance, one's sanity. We are reminded of Christa Wolf's works, which, though different in style, are equally intense, serious, and relentlessly sincere, and whose protagonists all struggle with the "schwere Versuchung abzubrechen"¹⁵⁷. This is where Karin is at odds with Edgar Wibeau. She sympathizes with the Plenzdorf rebel, but feels that not only is he still very young, but also his sufferings and the impact they have on him fail to reach the core of things, in contrast to Goethe's Werther who never ceased to be painfully aware of it:

... der Werther, den er immer zitierte, hing noch anders mit der Welt zusammen ... Der stieß sich an ihrem Kern. W. stieß sich an allem Äußerem, das war lustig, und ging per Zufall über den Jordan ... Und doch war in all dem Äußerem ein Inneres, W. drang nur nicht hinein, ein tieferer Widerspruch - den man finden müßte! (45)

Braun's protagonists expose themselves to the contradictions surrounding them. Their motto can be summed up in Kast's words addressed to himself when he watches the workers' demonstration from the safe and comfortable vantage point of the grandstand reserved for Party functionaries:

Ich dachte: du selbst, Genosse, indem du hier sitzt, indem du diesen Platz einnimmst wie selbstverständlich über den anderen und deine Rolle spielst, du selbst verwigst diesen Zustand, diese Trennung, diese Herrschaft über deine Genossen. Steh auf, erhebe dich, Genosse, geruhe an die Arbeit zu gehn, eine Arbeit, die diesen Zustand ändert (175).

Karin, too, is described as "eine Kämpferin" (80), fighting not for her personal freedom but for the freedom and equality of all. This requires great effort, side by side with all others: "Ohne unter den Leuten zu sein, zu reden, zu arbeiten, war das Leben tödlich leer" (94).

Both, Kast and Karin, belong to the small number of those who (in terms of Braun's re-interpretation of Plato's parable of the cave) have discovered that the human condition can only be improved by people themselves: There is no source of light other than people's minds; nor, indeed, is there any cave with oppressing walls other than that erected, century after century, by those inhabiting it. According to Braun's version of the parable, the first to discover this fraud committed by mankind against itself, and to attempt to rise to their full height, paid for their boldness with their lives. But the example set by them and the light that briefly shone over the others, who were still crouching, encouraged more and more of them to do likewise: "Aber in dieser Zeit begann ein neues, ein härteres Training, des schmerzhaften und wunderbaren aufrechten Gangs"¹⁵⁸.

As Dennis Tate has shown¹⁵⁹, Braun's Unvollendete Geschichte, in terms of themes, structure and language, is part of a German literary tradition diametrically opposed to that of the 'Bildungsroman' which so strongly informs the books we have been investigating here. For it builds, not on Goethe's Wilhelm Meister but on Büchner's Lenz. Yet, just as Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. draws on both, the 'Bildungsroman' tradition and the 'Sturm und Drang' work of the young Goethe, Braun, by saving his protagonist from destruction (at least at this point in her life) diverges from the Lenz model and introduces a note of hope: The socialist ideal of the equality of all men and the abolition of social hierarchies proves strong enough to restore Karin's will to live and to remain involved in the struggle to work for a better society. As Edgar Wibeau does not commit suicide from despair, indeed, lacks any sympathy with Werther's decision: "sich ein Loch in seine olle Birne [zu schießen]"¹⁶⁰, so Karin regains sufficient inner strength to avoid the fate of Büchner's Lenz and Braun's Kast, both of whom lose their grip on themselves when their closest personal relationships fail, while Karin's remains intact.

There is another point of contact between the two young East German protagonists, Edgar Wibeau and Karin. Both young people are obsessed with a longing for open, spontaneous and authentic relationships among people. Karin's dream which fills her with "eine ungeheure Hoffnung" (87) culminates in the woman worker tearing away the "Wust ..., der sich als neue Moral deklarierte" (87). Her dream had been

articulated ten years previously by Paul Bauch, the protagonist of Volker Braun's first play¹⁶¹:

Es wird ein Überfluß an materiellen Gütern da sein,
ein Überfluß an Gedanken und Gefühlen. Es wird
keinen Grund mehr geben, irgendeinen Menschen nicht
zu lieben. Die Liebe wird keine Tragödie mehr sein.
Die Konflikte werden zart und duftend wie Pfirsiche
vor uns liegen, ein Frühstück. Ich glaube, der
Mensch des neuen Jahrtausends wird leben, wie es
angenehm ist. Es gibt keine Sitten, es gibt keine
Normen¹⁶².

IV

The 'rebel in jeans' represents one literary manifestation of frictions between the young and their society in the German Democratic Republic of the 1970's. There are others, such as the indifferent conformist, the passive victim, the political opponent and the deeply committed moral idealist and fighter. In purely quantitative terms, works of 'Jeans Prosa' can be said to have been rather more numerous than others - possibly an indication that, after Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., 'Jeans Prosa' had become a welcome way of channelling critical attitudes into a literary form which represented no serious obstacles in ideological terms.

What possible further developments in the 'Jeans Prosa' of East Germany might one anticipate? In the case of Plenzdorf, as

previously with Salinger and Aksënov, the move away from realism and towards a more stylized, mythical, mannerist form of writing has already happened. The fine balance between realism of detail and stylization of form was tilted in Die Legende vom Glück ohne Ende in favour of the latter. In works of 'Jeans Prosa' after 1972, the balance tilted the other way, in favour of realism, or more precisely, socialist realism, modifying unconditional escape and rejection of reality towards merely temporary escape and ultimate acquiescence. Whether escape or acquiescence - both would seem to imply a waiving of one's right to be involved in the process of shaping social reality to approach the socialist ideal.

Footnotes

Introduction

- 1 Berlin (East), 1961
 - 2 Berlin (East), 1962
 - 3 Halle/Saale, 1963
 - 4 Berlin (East), 1965; Munich, 1966
 - 5 Quoted from Neues Deutschland by Werner Liersch, "Rückblick, um auf Künftiges zu kommen" in Neue Deutsche Literatur 9/1972, Vol.20, p.137
 - 6 Brigitte Stuhlmacher, "Jugend" in Hans Kaufmann (Ed.), Tendenzen und Beispiele. Zur DDR-Literatur in den siebziger Jahren, Leipzig, 1981, p.193
 - 7 Werner Liersch, op.cit., pp.137-8
 - 8 Cf. Wolfgang Emmerich, Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR, Darmstadt/Neuwied, 1981, p.180
 - 9 Quoted from Helmut Fischbeck (Ed.), Literaturpolitik und Literaturkritik in der DDR, Frankfurt/Main, 1976, p.103
 - 10 Wolf Oschlies, Lenins Enkeln aufs Maul geschaut. Jugend-Jargon in Osteuropa, Cologne, 1981, p.14
 - 11 Wolf Oschlies, "Kein Bedarf an 'Sozialistischem Realismus'. Untersuchungen zu den literarischen Interessen osteuropäischer Jugendlicher" in Pädagogische Rundschau, 12/1978, Vol.32, p.916
 - 12 Brigitte Stuhlmacher, op.cit., p.198
 - 13 Wilhelm Girmus, "Lachen über Wibeau ... aber wie?" in Sinn und Form 6/1973, Vol.25, p.1277
 - 14 Cf. Wolf Oschlies, Lenins Enkeln aufs Maul geschaut, loc.cit., and Aleksandar Flaker, Modelle der Jeans Prosa. Zur literarischen Opposition bei Plenzdorf im osteuropäischen Romankontext, Kronberg/Taunus, 1975
 - 15 Wolf Oschlies, Lenins Enkeln aufs Maul geschaut, loc.cit.
 - 16 Nils Åke Nilsson, "Soviet Student Slang" in Scandoslavica, VI, Copenhagen, 1960, p.113
- Quoted from Wolf Oschlies, Lenins Enkeln aufs Maul geschaut, loc.cit., p.22

- 17 Cf. Edward Mozejko, Der sozialistische Realismus, Bonn, 1977
- 18 Priscilla Meyer, "Aksenov and Soviet Literature of the 1960s" in Russian Literary Tricquarterly, 6/1973, Vol.2, p.448
- 19 Aleksandar Flaker, Modelle der Jeans Prosa, loc.cit.
- 20 Leonid D. Rzhevsky, "The New Idiom" in Max Hayward and Edward L. Crowley (Eds.), Soviet Literature in the Sixties. An International Symposium, London, 1965, p.75
- 21 English translation by J. Němcová, The Cowards, London, 1958; also Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1972
- 22 Moscow, 1961; English translation by Alec Brown, A Starry Ticket, London, 1962
- 23 Leonid D. Rzhevsky, op.cit., p.77
- 24 Cf. documentation at the back of the German translation by Wilhelm Löser, Fahrkarte zu den Sternen, Cologne, 1962
- 25 Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1951; first Russian translation 1960. Cf. Aleksandar Flaker, op.cit., p.23
- 26 Cf. Peter J. Brenner, Plenzdorfs 'Neue Leiden des jungen Werthers', materialienbuch, Frankfurt/Main, 1972, who gives 1968/69 as the date of writing of the initial manuscript
- 27 Op.cit., pp.71-138
- 28 Cf. Peter J. Brenner's painstaking documentation
- 29 in Sinn und Form, 1/1973, Vol.25, pp.219-220
- 30 Cf. Karl-Heinz Jakobs, Heimatländische Kolportagen. Ein Buch Publizistik, Berlin (East), 1975, p.237
- 31 Cf. Dennis Tate's analysis of the Lenz tradition in East German literature which represents another, more significant as well as more lasting attempt on the part of G.D.R. authors to break away from the 'Bildungsroman' pattern (in The East German Novel: Identity, Community and Continuity, Bata, 1984, final chapter)
- 32 The books to be considered are (the editions mentioned being those to be referred to below):

Klaus Gerisch, Das Jahr und Katrin, Rostock, 1972
Werner Heiduczek, Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit. Erzählung, Berlin (East), 1971
Karl-Heinz Jakobs, Die Interviewer. Roman, Berlin (East), 1973
Dorothea Kleine, eintreffe heute, Rostock, 1978

- Heinz Kruschel, Gesucht wird die freundliche Welt, Halle/
Leipzig, 1976
- Ulrich Plenzdorf, Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., Frankfurt/Main,
1973
- " " Die Legende von Paul und Paula. Filmerzählung,
Frankfurt/Main, 1974
- " " Legende vom Glück ohne Ende, Rostock, 1979
- Rolf Schneider, Die Reise nach Jaroslaw, Rostock, 1974
- Helfried Schreiter, Ich fange mit dem Anfang an, Berlin (East),
1977
- Joachim Walther, Zwischen zwei Nächten, Berlin (East), 1972
- " " Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi, Berlin (East), 1975
- 33 Maxi Wander, Guten Morgen, du Schöne. Frauen in der DDR.
Protokolle, Berlin (East) and Darmstadt/Neuwied, 1978
- 34 such as Gerald K. Zschorsch, Glaubt bloß nicht, daß ich traurig
bin, Berlin (West), 1977; Thomas Auerbach F. et al (Eds.),
DDR-konkret. Geschichten und Berichte aus einem real existierenden
Land, Berlin (West), 1978; Siegm. Faust, In welchem Lande lebt
Neophisto? Schreiben in Deutschland, Munich, 1980
- 35 e.g. Wolfgang Joho, Der Sohn. Nachrichten aus der Bender-Welt,
Berlin (East), 1974; Günter Görlich, Eine Anzeige in der Zeitung,
Berlin (East), 1978; Erik Neutsch, Zwei leere Stühle, Halle/
Leipzig, 1979
- 36 in Sinn und Form 5/1975 and Frankfurt/Main, 1977
- 37 Berlin (East)/Weimar and Frankfurt/Main, 1979
- 38 Heiduczek, Mark Aurel oder ein Semester Zärtlichkeit (1971);
Walther, Zwischen zwei Nächten (1972); Jakobs, Die Interviewer
(1973)
- 39 Schneider, Die Reise nach Jaroslaw (1974); Walther Ich bin nun
mal kein Yogi (1975); Kruschel, Gesucht wird die freundliche
Welt (1976); Schreiter, Ich fange mit dem Anfang an (1977);
Kleine, eintreffe heute (1978)

Chapters 2 - 5

- 1 Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. was written in 1968/1969, first
printed in Sinn und Form, Vol.24, 1972, pp.254-310, and published
as a separate volume in Rostock and Frankfurt/Main, 1973. The
text also exists in various versions as a theatre play, a radio
play and an unprinted film script
- 2 The most complete and up-to-date bibliography is to be found in
Peter J. Brenner (Ed.), Plenzdorfs 'Neue Leiden des jungen W.',
Frankfurt/Main, 1982. However, the only inclusions from the

Anglosaxon world appear to be American or Canadian. Articles published in British periodicals (such as those by Hollis, Kane, Shaw and Thomas listed in the bibliography below) do not feature in Brenner

- 3 Gloria Zimmermann, "Liebesgeschichte zwischen Traum und Wirklichkeit", Neues Deutschland, 29/30.3.1980. - Horst Haase, "Die Legende von Paul, Paula und Laura", Neue Deutsche Literatur, 8/1980, Vol 28, pp.144-150. - Dennis Tate, "Ulrich Plenzdorf, 'Legende vom Glück ohne Ende'", GDR Monitor, 1980, No.3, pp.55-56
- 4 Cf. Stephan Hermlin in Sinn und Form, 1/1973, Vol.25, p.244, for whom the most important thing about this text is "daß es vielleicht zum erstenmal, jedenfalls in der Prosa, authentisch die Gedanken, die Gefühle der DDR-Arbeiterjugend zeigt". Plenzdorf's producer in Halle and Berlin explains his own enthusiasm and that of the young audience: "Was hier wirkte, was zum großen gemeinsamen Theatererlebnis wurde, das war die Geschichte eines jungen Mannes von heute, das war die Konfrontation mit einem Teil unserer eigenen Wirklichkeit. Ich glaube auch: das ist das Wichtige und Entscheidende an Plenzdorfs Werk" (ibid., p.251)
- 5 London, 1979
- 6 "Ulrich Plenzdorfs Flucht nach innen" in Merkur, 12/1973, Vol.27, p.1178
- 7 "Plenzdorf's 'Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.' as a Prescribed Text" in Modern Languages 2/1981, Vol.LXII, pp.92-98
- 8 Ibid., p.97
- 9 in a lecture given on October 31, 1972, in the Academy of Arts in East Berlin and published, in an extended and revised edition, in Sinn und Form early the following year (1/1973, pp.222-252)
- 10 Ibid., p.232
- 11 Ibid., p.233
- 12 Ibid., p.234
- 13 "Der Fänger im DDR-Roggen" in Die Zeit, 4.5.1973; also in Entgegnung. Zur deutschen Literatur der siebziger Jahre, Stuttgart, 1979, pp.262-270
- 14 Entgegnung, p. 265
- 15 Ibid., p.266
- 16 Ibid., p.270
- 17 Ibid., p.269

- 18 "Versions of Holden. Two East German Drop-Outs" in GDR Monitor 4/1980-81, pp.23-24
- 19 Ibid., p.26
- 20 "Werther in a New Guise: Ulrich Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W." in Modern Languages 4/1976, Vol.LVII, pp.178-182
- 21 Ibid., p.181
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 "Plenzdorf's 'Die neuen Leiden des jungen W' as a Prescribed Text" in Modern Languages 2/1981, Vol.LXII, pp.92-98
- 24 Ibid., p.97
- 25 "Janus and the Social Dichotomy: Facets of Socialist Realism in the East German Novel in the 1970s" in Seminar. A Journal of Germanic Studies 2/1981, Vol.XVII, pp.114-129
- 26 Ibid., p.127
- 27 Entgegnung, p.267
- 28 The first German translation appeared in Zurich in 1954 and was later revised by Heinrich Böll (1965). Böll's version also came out in East Berlin (Volk und Welt) in the same year. The American original became available in Eastern Bloc countries in an edition from Moscow (Progress Publishers, 1968)
- 29 J.D. Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1951, p.5
- 30 Ibid., p.220
- 31 For instance Aleksandar Flaker, Modelle der Jeans Prosa. Zur literarischen Opposition bei Plenzdorf im osteuropäischen Romankontext, Kronberg/Taunus, 1975
- 32 Moscow, 1961; London, 1962; West German translation by Wilhelm Löser, Fahrkarte zu den Sternen, Cologne, 1962
- 33 in Peter Brenner, op.cit.
- 34 "er hat Leben in sich kommen lassen", Brenner, op.cit., p.136
- 35 i.e. Kennen Sie Urban? which was scripted by Plenzdorf himself
- 36 J.H. Reid, in his introduction to the English edition of Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. quite rightly draws attention to this point

of contact with a number of West German writers, especially Heinrich Böll (who, we know, was influenced by Salinger when writing his Ansichten eines Clowns. Cf. Manfred Durzak's interview with Heinrich Böll in Das Amerika-Bild in der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur: historische Voraussetzungen und aktuelle Beispiele, Stuttgart etc., 1979, p.145-227). More generally speaking, the two authors share a fundamentally moralist attitude, a pre-occupation with social criticism and a profound distrust of the intellect and its workings. The latter point comes out particularly in their respective portrayal of 'good' women

- 37 Cf. Andrew Hollis' interpretation of Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. as a "flight from mother towards father ... to Charlie"; the ending is seen as reflecting Edgar's despair at being rejected by Charlie and at his concomitant failure to find his own identity ("Plenzdorf's 'Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.' as a Prescribed Text", op.cit.)
- 38 Gero von Wilpert, Sachwörterbuch der Literatur, 6th rev. and extended edition, Stuttgart, 1979
- 39 "Die Legende von Paul, Paula und Laura" in Neue Deutsche Literatur, 8/1980, Vol.28, p.146. Also in Eberhard Günther et al. (Eds.), Kritik 80. Rezensionen zur DDR-Literatur, Halle/Leipzig, 1981, p.134
- 40 Plenzdorf himself has acknowledged his indebtedness to Heinrich Böll (cf. Sinn und Form 1/1973, Vol.25, p.243), and, as noted earlier (fn. 36), we feel an elective affinity between the two authors' 'good women', such as Paula in Plenzdorf's novel and Leni Pfeiffer in Böll's Gruppenbild mit Dame (Cologne, 1971) or even Katharina Blum in Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum (Cologne, 1974). Leni is described as "ein verkanntes Genie der Sinnlichkeit" (33), yet highly selective in her choice of male partners; as gifted with the purity of a nun or a child and having a natural attraction to mysticism. The similarity between Legende vom Glück ohne Ende and Gruppenbild mit Dame even extends to the figure of the narrator; in both cases the narrator remains anonymous, is a minor character in his own story, is no longer young and given to reporting seemingly insignificant details in the most painstaking and pedantic manner
- 41 We are reminded of Volker Braun's Kipper Bauch who similarly disappears without trace, the only Braun character who does
- 42 Cf. Flaker, op.cit.
- 43 Berlin (East), 1961, and Munich, 1975
- 44 Halle/Saale, 1963, and Munich, 1973
- 45 Beschreibung eines Sommers, p.207

- 46 Cf. fn. 32 of Introduction
- 47 8/1971, pp.19-20
- 48 Cf. Konrad Franke, Die Literatur der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Zurich/Munich, 1974, p.393
- 49 Cf. one of the mottos of the book: "Nur wenn wir träumen, sind wir frei. Mick Jagger"
- 50 p.41
- 51 by Helfried Schreiter
- 52 Berlin (East), 1973
- 53 Thus Jochen Staadt (in Jos Hoogeveen and Gerd Labrousse (Eds.), DDR-Roman und Literaturgesellschaft, Amsterdam, 1981, pp.103-112) deplores the lack of critical attention shown to Die Interviewer which he regards as "für die DDR-Wirklichkeit herausragend brisant" (p.103)
- 54 "Ich kritisiere nicht, ich stelle dar. Darin liegt keine Kritik, denn indem wir die Wirklichkeit darstellen, signalisieren wir einen Zustand, und es wird sich herausstellen, ob dieser Zustand verändert werden muß oder nicht" (interview with Joachim Walther in J. Walther, Meinetwegen Schmetterlinge, Berlin (East), 1973, p.29). - Or: "Der Romantyp, den ich anstrebe, zielt mehr und mehr auf Darstellung mit dokumentarischen Mitteln" (interview with Eva Kaufmann in Weimarer Beiträge 5/1975, Vol.XXI, p.61)
- 55 Even lonelier figures are only found in texts dealing with victims of society, such as the boy in Plenzdorf's story "kein runter kein fern" (in Humbert Fink et al. (Eds.), Klagenfurter Texte 1978, pp.13-31). Cf. Conclusion
- 56 "Reflexionen übers Verändern. Zu Karl-Heinz Jakobs Roman 'Die Interviewer'" in Neue Deutsche Literatur, 11/1973, Vol.21, p.88
- 57 Cf. interview with Eva Kaufmann, loc.cit., p.59
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Manfred Behn-Liebherz in Kritisches Lexikon der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur under "Karl-Heinz Jakobs", p.5
- 60 Auskunft. Neue Prosa aus der DDR, Munich, 1974
- 61 Düsseldorf, 1979
- 62 Jochen Staadt, op.cit., regards the son as the winner in the family conflict, but fails to give adequate recognition to the

- ambiguity inherent in the novel. Staadt interprets Die Interviewer from the point of view of the later novel and its condemnation of East German society, thereby attributing to it a clarity of purpose and intention which the text fails to bear out. Thus Staadt claims: "In der Auseinandersetzung Vater-Sohn in Die Interviewer bleibt für beide Zukunft, für beide weitere Auseinandersetzung, bleiben neue Einheit und neue Gegensätze" (109)
- 63 Ingredients of both variants are found in Aksënov's A Starry Ticket which, in the Eastern European context, served as a model of a novel about the opposition and final integration of the young
- 64 Cf. the relationship between Rita and Manfred in Christa Wolf's Der geteilte Himmel, with Rita being the morally stronger character
- 65 This account is the subject of a story written in 1969 and published under the title of "Teilweise Rekonstruktion der Kindheit meines Freundes Alexander" in Stadtlandschaft mit Freunden, Berlin (East), 1978, and in the West German edition of this anthology, Ruhe bewahren, Königstein/Taunus, 1979
- 66 Tolja expressly states his love of railway stations as places of hope (86-7), an idea strongly reminiscent of Heinrich Böll's protagonists to whom Tolja seems close in many ways
- 67 Christa and Alexander in this text take on the function of the elder brother in The Catcher in the Rye (Salinger) and The Starry Ticket (Aksënov) as mediators between the young and the adult world, having the trust of both. To the young, such as Reinhold Porsche, they represent proof that individuality and social integration are not mutually exclusive
- 68 on which Stranka's film "Sabine Wulff" is based (1978)
- 69 Irma Hanke in Deutschland Archiv 8/1979, Vol.12, p.883
- 70 Joachim Hannemann in Neue Deutsche Literatur 10/1979, Vol.27, p.171
- 71 Die Zeit, 16.5.1975
- 72 "Versions of Holden. Two East German Drop-Outs" in GDR Monitor, No.4, 1980, p.28
- 72a Cf. his interview with Joachim Walther in Meinetwegen Schmetterlinge, Berlin (East), 1973, pp.61-68, where Schneider stresses the legitimacy of "das ironische oder sentimentalische Spielen mit literarisch Überkommenem" (64), which Walther rephrases as "das artistische Schlüpfen in alle möglichen Tonarten" (66)
- 73 Cf. Günter de Bruyn, Die Preisverleihung, Halle/Leipzig, 1972, p.137-138, where the father's comfort offered to his daughter Cornelia is of a similarly limp kind

- 74 Heinrich Mohr, "Vacation from Reality: Rolf Schneider's Novel 'Die Reise nach Jaroslaw'" in New German Critique 9/1979, p.121
- 75 Martin Kane, "Versions of Holden. Two East German Drop-Outs", loc.cit., p.33
- 76 Cf. Walther's postscript in Ich bin nun mal kein Yogi
- 77 Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., p.66
- 78 i.e. criticism which places this story into the category of book/film where "die Leute in einer Tour lernen und gebessert werden" (Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., p.42)
- 79 A. Flaker, op.cit., p.34
- 80 A. Flaker, op.cit., p.175, identifies a similar phenomenon in Holden Caulfield's approach to Dickens' David Copperfield and Oliver Twist as well as to Hardy's The Return of the Native
- 81 as, for instance, in Plenzdorf's story "kein runter kein fern", loc.cit., or in other texts by young political opponents.
Cf. Conclusion
- 82 Max Halbe, "Jugend"; Frank Wedekind, "Frühlings Erwachen"; Walter Hasenclever, "Der Sohn"
- 83 "Jugend" in Hans Kaufmann (Ed.), Tendenzen und Beispiele. Zur DDR-Literatur in den siebziger Jahren, Leipzig, 1981, p.216
- 84 Cf. Peter Gruber's short text, "Frankreich unter der Käseglocke" in Stefan Heym (Ed.), Auskunft 2, Munich, 1978; see also Joachim Walther, "Wochenende im Grünen" in Stefan Heym (Ed.), Auskunft. Neue Prosa aus der DDR, Munich, 1974
- 85 Cf. Erich Loest's story "Haare" in Etappe Rom. Zwölf Geschichten, Berlin (East), 1975, 236-247, where a mother cuts off her son's long hair during his sleep; he takes his revenge by having his arm tattooed
- 86 We may recall that Dimka in Aksënov's The Starry Ticket is introduced as wearing a "gaudy check shirt of Czechoslovak origin, tight trousers of unknown provenance, a pair of light Austrian shoes" (7). And Holden Caulfield in Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye never parts with his peaked cap which he insists on wearing back to front
- 87 In Volker Braun's story "Der Hörsaal", written in 1964, beat music played in competition with "Bumsmusik" is still referred to by an irate "Kulturhaus" functionary as "solche fremde Musik" and is strictly rationed (by law) to forty per cent of any one evening programme (Das ungezwungene Leben Kasts, Frankfurt/Main, 1979, p.59)

- 86 No. 16, pp.224-226
 - 89 Op.cit., p.226
 - 90 Cologne, 1963
 - 91 Manfred Durzak, Das Amerika-Bild in der deutschen Gegenwarts-literatur: historische Voraussetzungen und aktuelle Beispiele, Stuttgart etc., 1979, p.159
 - 92 Op.cit., p.140
 - 93 Op.cit., p.226
 - 94 This, according to A. Flaker (op.cit., p.120), is a characteristic of a number of "young prose" works in Soviet Russia and in other Eastern European countries, and Polish critics have named it "little realism"
- Cf. Horst Schönemann's comment in an interview with Ingrid Seyforth: "Dabei wirkt der Umstand von Edgars Tod niemals deprimierend, weil Plenzdorf vom legitimen Recht des Theaters Gebrauch macht, den Toten lebendig werden zu lassen. Das reiche Bühnenleben seines Helden lässt so einerseits den Tod nicht ständig gegenwärtig erscheinen, aber ihn andererseits durch den Reichtum der Figur als deutliche Aufforderung empfinden" (Peter J. Brenner, Plenzdorfs 'Neue Leiden des jungen W.', Frankfurt/Main, 1982, pp.148-149. Originally in Theater der Zeit, 8/1972, Vol.27, pp.18 onwards)
- 95 Cf. Durzak, "Zitat und Montage im deutschen Roman der Gegenwart" in Manfred Durzak (Ed.), Die deutsche Literatur der Gegenwart. Aspekte und Tendenzen, Stuttgart, 1980
 - 96 Cf. Christa Wolf's account of the launching of Sputnik in Der geteilte Himmel, Chapter 3
 - 97 Norman, from the outset, sets great store by being regarded not as an idle tourist but as someone travelling on business as well as for enjoyment (39)
 - 98 Flaker, op.cit., p.90
 - 99 New York/London, 1966
 - 100 "Die Sprache Edgar Wibeaus: Gestus, Stil, Fingierter Jargon" in Connaissance de la RDA, No.11, Nov. 1980, pp.61-94. Quotation from p.77
 - 101 Language as Social Semiotic. The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning, London, 1978, p.165

- 102 Ewald Lang, op.cit., p.77
- 103 Aleksandar Flaker, op.cit., p.103
- 104 Sinn und Form, 4/1974, Vol.25, p.868
- 105 In Die Legende von Paul und Paula Plenzdorf does make use of different modes of speech, but none of them could be described as 'youth jargon'. In Legende vom Glück ohne Ende the language is that of the narrator throughout
- 106 Cf. Ewald Lang, op.cit., p.83, notes that while "Plünnen" exists as a regional colloquialism, "Rapeiken" is a creation of Plenzdorf's, whose sound and stress pattern conform with other existing ones in similar twin formations ("Kleider und Klamotten")
- 107 an exception in that it is used not derogatorily but rather as a term of endearment for Edgar's Berlin allotment
- 108 Alexandar Flaker, op.cit., pp.137-144
- 109 Wolf Oschlies, op.cit., pp.174-181
- 110 Quoted in Alexandar Flaker, op.cit., p.138
- 111 Ewald Lang, op.cit., p.85
- 112 Joachim Stave, "Jugend und Sprache" in Muttersprache, 1960, pp.11-14. Wolf Oschlies, op.cit., p.132
- 113 according to Ewald Lang, op.cit., p.82, another creation of Plenzdorf's
- 114 Ewald Lang, op.cit., p.91, points out that Plenzdorf uses Böll's literal translation of Salinger's "It killed me", i.e. "Das warf mich um", as well as more elaborate ironical variants
- 115 Cf. Ewald Lang, op.cit., p.84
- 116 Op.cit., p.90
- 117 Cf. Ewald Lang, op.cit., p.81
- 118 "Bemerkungen zur Sprechweise der Jugendlichen in der DDR" in Sprachpflege, 6/1979, pp.116-118. Quotation from p.117
- 119 Cf. Margot Heinemann, op.cit.
- 120 Op.cit., p.85-6

- 121 Cf., for instance, Lutz Mackensen, Verführung durch Sprache: Manipulation als Versuchung, Munich, 1973; Barbara Marzahn, Der Deutschlandbegriff der DDR. Dargestellt vornehmlich an der Sprache des Neuen Deutschland, Düsseldorf, 1979; Horst Dieter Schlosser, "Kommunikation und Sprache in der DDR" in Deutschland Archiv, 5/1982, Vol. 15, pp. 527-529
- 122 Op.cit., p.67. The term was coined by Eva Windmöller, Leben in der DDR, Hamburg, no year, p.177
- 123 Op.cit., p.198
- 124 "Forstarbeiter" in Die wunderbaren Jahre, Frankfurt/Main, 1976, p.123
- 125 quoted in Wolf Oschlies, op.cit., p.67
- 126 J.H. Reid, in his Introduction to the Harrap edition of Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., notes that while the newspaper report averages 52 words per sentence, the first paragraph spoken by Edgar averages only 8.5 words.
- 127 Legende vom Glück ohne Ende, p.149
- 128 another point of contact with those of Heinrich Böll's characters who are critical of society
- 129 Cf. Alexandar Flaker, op.cit.
- 130 Cf. Eward Lang, op.cit., p.93
- 131 Plenzdorfs Neue Leiden des jungen W., Frankfurt/Main, 1982, p.33
- 132 Cf. Ilse H. Reis, Ulrich Plenzdorfs Gegenentwurf zu Goethes 'Werther', Berne /Munich, 1977, pp.95-106, whose analysis of some examples of Salinger's, Böll's and Plenzdorf's language leads her to conclude that Plenzdorf may well have read Salinger's book in the original (p.95).
- 133 Op.cit., p.97
- 134 However, one might justifiably argue that the first East German author to take this bold step was Uwe Johnson in his novel Mutmaßungen über Jakob (1959) which he wrote in the G.D.R. but was unable to find a publisher for in his own country
- 135 Berlin (East), 1974
- 136 Berlin (East), 1978
- 137 Halle/Leipzig, 1979

- 138 Volksmacht, 8.7.78. Quoted from Eberhard Günther et al., Kritik 73. Rezensionen zur DDR-Literatur, Halle/Leipzig, 1979, p.44
- 139 Neues Deutschland, 28.4.78. Quoted from Eberhard Günther et al. (Eds.) Kritik 78, loc.cit., p.40
- 140 Frankfurt/Main, 1978
- 141 in Etappe Rom. Zwölf Geschichten, Berlin (East), 1975
- 142 in Die wunderbaren Jahre, Frankfurt/Main, 1976
- 143 Berlin (East) and Darmstadt/Neuwied, 1978
- 144 in Stefan Heym (Ed.), Auskunft. Neue Prosa aus der DDR, Munich, 1974
- 145 in Die wunderbaren Jahre, Frankfurt/Main, 1976
- 146 all three in Versuchte Nähe, Hamburg, 1977
- 147 in Ruhe bewahren, Königstein/Taunus, 1979
- 148 in Vor den Vätern sterben die Söhne, Berlin (West), 1977
- 149 Hamburg, 1979
- 150 in Sinn und Form 5/1975, Vol.27, and Frankfurt/Main, 1977. Quoted from the West German edition
- 151 Berlin (West), 1977
- 152 Berlin (West), 1978
- 153 Munich, 1980
- 154 Das ungezwungne Leben Kasts, Berlin (East)/Weimar and Frankfurt/Main, 1972
- 155 Das ungezwungne Leben Kasts, Berlin (East)/Weimar and Frankfurt/Main, 1979
- 156 Cf. fn. 150
- 157 Kindheitsmuster, Berlin (East)/Weimar, 1976, and Neuwied, 1977
- 158 Training des aufrechten Gangs, Halle/Saale, 1979, p.61
- 159 in The East German Novel: Identity, Community and Continuity, Bath, 1984, final chapter
- 160 Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., loc.cit., p.36

- 161 "Die Ballade vom Kipper Braun", printed in Forum, 1966, promptly attacked and withdrawn, then published in a much revised form under the title of "Die Kipper" (Berlin (East), 1972). Also in Karlheinz Braun (Ed.), Deutsches Theater der Gegenwart, Vol.2, Frankfurt/Main, 1967
- 162 quoted from Heinz Klunker, Zeitstücke und Zeitgenossen. Gegenwartstheater in der DDR, Munich, 1975 (rev. ed.), p.99. Klunker points out that in Die Kipper this passage appears in a shortened form, with "Die Liebe" to "ein Frühstück" having been eliminated. - In the F.R.G. Die Kipper appeared in Spectaculum 16, Frankfurt/Main, 1972

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Summary

East German fiction in the seventies has seen the emergence of books on youth of a kind not previously known in the German Democratic Republic. The best known and most widely acclaimed of them was Ulrich Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., but there were others, preceding as well as following it, which display similar characteristics so that a recognizable collective identity can be established.

In this thesis a dozen works of this kind are analyzed as to the particular way in which the authors handle characterization, narrative perspective and structure, as well as language. It traces recurring motifs and personal characteristics of protagonists and the gradual replacement of the device of an omniscient narrator by that of a subjective narrative perspective (or several such). It demonstrates the authors' continuing reliance on the structure of the socialist 'Bildungsroman' and the rarity of cases where ultimate social integration of the young rebel is avoided. And it places particular emphasis on the fact that, in contrast to other East German works on the young at odds with their social and political environment, the books studied rely to a greater or lesser extent on the use of a diversity of forms of speech, especially that of youth jargon.

The introductory and concluding chapters place the books under discussion within the wider context of developments in East German cultural policies and of international and national literary traditions.